# THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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## UKRAINE HITS RUSSIAN BOMBERS AHEAD OF TRUCE TALKS IN ISTANBUL

**A Ukrainian drone attack destroyed over 40 Russian planes on Sunday—a day before the two sides were to meet for talks in Istanbul**

### TOP UKRAINIAN COMMANDER PUTS IN PAPERS

The spectacular claim that Ukraine damaged $2 billion worth of Russian aircraft parked at airbases thousands of kilometres away came as Kyiv announced that a Russian counter-military strike killed at least 12 of its soldiers at an army training site, leading to the resignation of its ground forces commander Mykhailo Drapaty, who owed 'responsibility' for the hit

### TWO RUSSIAN AIR BASES BEAR THE BRUNT

- Russia's defence ministry in a statement confirmed the attacks from Ukraine. The FPV drones damaged aircraft and sparked fires on air bases in Irkutsk as well as Russia's northern Murmansk
- Ukraine's top army chief Oleksandr Syrskyi said Russia attacked Pokrovsk, Toretsk and Lyman in Donetsk as well as Sumy | **P9**

**472**

**DRONES LAUNCHED BY RUSSIA ON SUNDAY IN ITS COUNTER OFFENSIVE**


CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

# GST collections stay above ₹2 lakh cr in May

Gross GST revenue up 16.4%; robust mop-up for 2nd month in a row; double-digit growth in several large states

**DIPAK MONDAL** @ New Delhi

IF May GST collection—tax collected for April transactions—are anything to go by, India's economy started the financial year with a bang despite the disruptions caused by US president Donald Trump's threat of reciprocal tariffs.

Gross monthly GST collections in May rose by 16.4% to touch ₹2.01 lakh crore—only the third time since the indirect tax regime came into force in July 2017. Gross domestic revenue rose by 14% to ₹1.5 lakh crore, while revenue from imports increased by 25% to ₹51,000 crore.

Net GST revenues (after deducting refunds from gross collections) showed even better buoyancy as the same increased by 20.4% to ₹1.74 lakh crore. Total refunds contracted by 4% year-on-year.

This is the second month in a row when gross collections witnessed double-digit growth. In April, gross GST collections hit an all-time high of ₹2.36 lakh crore in April 2025, 12.6% higher than the collection of ₹2.10 lakh crore in April 2024. This augurs well for the country as FY25 showed GST revenue collections growth slowing down to single digit numbers.

"A 16% growth in GST collections in the month shows a renewed upward momentum after a few months of growth in the range of 11 to 12%. If the growth continues in this range for next couple of months, it might provide the cushion for the Government to look at rate rationalisation on which a lot of work has already been done," says Pratik Jain, partner, Price Waterhouse & Co LLP.

Meanwhile, M S Mani, partner, Deloitte India, says a 25% higher GST revenue from imports indicates that imports have accelerated despite recent tariff headwinds.

Several large states, including those in the South, have seen high double-digit growth. Collections from Maharashtra rose by 17%, Karnataka by 20%, Tamil Nadu by 25% and Kerala by 24%. Bihar (23%) and Delhi (58%) and West Bengal (18%) are few other notable good performers during the month. Gujarat (4%), Telangana (6%) and Andhra Pradesh (-2%) were few of the laggards.

According to Deloitte's Mani, the wide variations in GST collections growth across states require a thorough analysis across the sectors that are important in each state.

"The average growth across the country does not appear to be uniformly reflected across states, possibly due to sectoral or seasonal factors which require a deeper data-based analysis," he argues.

**GROSS GST REVENUE**

| | May '24 | May '25 |
|---|---|---|
| CGST | 32,409 | 35,434 |
| SGST | 40,265 | 43,902 |
| IGST | 87,781 | 1,08,836 |
| CESS | 12,284 | 12,879 |
| Total | 1,72,739 | 2,01,050 |

(Figures in ₹ crore)

**Import gains**

GST revenue from inward shipments grew 25%, showing imports shot up despite tariff headwinds

CAMPAIGN BUGLE

# Shah raises Op Sindoor, CAA in Bengal poll pitch

**RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR** @ New Delhi

SOUNDING the poll bugle in West Bengal ahead of the 2026 Assembly polls, Union home minister Amit Shah on Sunday accused the Mamata Banerjee-led government of opposing Operation Sindoor and the Waqf Amendment Bill to appease the Muslim vote bank.

Addressing party leaders and workers in Kolkata, Shah alleged Hindus were being oppressed in the state and forced to flee. The recent riots in Murshidabad were not spontaneous but orchestrated by the state, he claimed, adding that the Mamata-led Trinamool Congress shielded the perpetrators of violence. Shah also alleged that Hindu refugees were getting notices that their names may be removed from the voter list. "There is no need to worry. Simply fill out the CAA applications, and we will ensure that they are granted Indian citizenship," he said.

Raising the Pahalgam terror attack issue, Shah said, "When tourists from Bengal were killed in the attack, Mamata Didi remained silent. But now she is having problems with Operation Sindoor."

Union Home Minister Amit Shah addresses an organisational meeting of the BJP in Kolkata on Sunday | PTI

Mamata Banerjee had recently accused the Centre of politicising Operation Sindoor for electoral gains. "Operation Sindoor was to punish terrorists. But Didi was pained at the deaths of terrorists and gave a cheap political statement. She made West Bengal a centre for infiltrators, corruption and crimes," Shah said, adding that the TMC's days were numbered. Shah said the upcoming elections are not just about Bengal, but about national security, adding: "Didi has left Bengal's borders open for Bangladeshis. Infiltration is taking place in Bengal with her blessing."

In a counter to Shah's charges, the TMC said stopping infiltration is the responsibility of the BSF, not state government.

# Hasina charged with crimes against humanity

**AGENCIES** @ Dhaka

FUGITIVE former Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina orchestrated a "systematic attack" that amounted to crimes against humanity in her attempt to crush the uprising that toppled her government, Bangladeshi prosecutors said at the opening of her trial on Sunday.

Up to 1,400 people were killed between July and August 2024 after Hasina's government launched its crackdown, according to the United Nations.

Hasina, 77, fled by helicopter to India as the student-led uprising ended her 15-year rule, and she has defied an extradition order to return to Dhaka.

Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) is prosecuting former senior figures connected to Hasina's ousted government and her now-banned party, the Awami League. "Upon scrutinising the evidence, we reached the conclusion that it was a coordinated, widespread and systematic attack," ICT chief prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam told the court in his opening speech.

Separately on Sunday, the Supreme Court restored the registration of Bangladesh's largest Islamist party, Jamaat-e-Islami, allowing it to take part in elections.

# Minor gangraped in Belagavi; 2 minors among 5 held

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** @ Belagavi

A deeply disturbing incident of six youth allegedly abducting a 15-year-old girl and subjecting her to repeated sexual assault has come to light in Belagavi. The accused, two of whom are minors, reportedly filmed the crime and used the video to blackmail the girl, continuing to exploit her over time. Though the offence took place between December 2024 and January 2025, it has come to light now.

According to the complaint filed by the girl's parents at the APMC police station, she was first taken in a car by one of the accused, who is her friend, to Windmill Hill at Muttyanatti village in December. He then introduced her to his five friends, and all of them allegedly raped her, while one of them filmed the offence.

The second time, the accused threatened her that the video would be leaked and took her to Khadi Machine Hill near Alatage in January. This time, there were three youth and all of them allegedly raped her. Both the crime sites are located in the Kakati police limits.

It is suspected that the accused might have threatened her with leaking the video and raped her more number of times.

Her prolonged trauma came to light when her parents noticed changes in her behaviour and asked her about it. They managed to catch one of the accused, a 19-year-old, and handed him over to the police. **P5**

PERENNIAL MISERY

Residents evacuate with their livestock after floods forced them out of their homes in Lakhimpur, Assam, on Sunday | PTI | **P8**

EXPRESS READ

### BMTC driver suspended over bid to run over woman

Bengaluru: A Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) bus driver, who allegedly attempted to run over a woman who was arguing with him following a collision, has been suspended. Driver Prashanth has been placed under suspension pending a departmental inquiry. The incident took place on the evening of May 23 | **P3**

# Labourer dies as earth caves in at Hutti gold mines

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** @ Kalaburagi / Raichur

A labourer died, while another was seriously injured after earth caved in inside a mining shaft at Hutti gold mines in Lingsugur taluk of Raichur district on Sunday.

Sharanabasava Amaresh Veerapur (39) died while working at a depth of 2,800 feet at Mallappa shaft. A pocket of trapped air exploded in the mine, trapping Sharanabasava under rock and soil, sources said. The other labourer, Nirupadi Kanakappa Panlmanakellur (22), who was seriously injured, was first admitted to Hutti Gold Mining Company hospital and later shifted to Belagavi.

After the incident, labourers stopped work and held a dharna in front of the company office, alleging that proper precautionary measures had not been taken.

As a large amount of ore and soil had collapsed inside the mine shaft, the company's rescue team, officials and labourers struggled to retrieve Sharanabasava's body. **P5**



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School of Electronics and Communication Engineering
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WUNDERKIND

# *At 11, B'luru's Charvi making heads turn at Norway Open*

**SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN** @ Stavanger

INDIA's chess conveyor belt shows no signs of slowing down. One of the latest to emerge from the seemingly limitless pool is Charvi A, who has already made the likes of Viswanathan Anand sit up and take notice. The 11-year-old, currently in action at the Norway Open event in the city, is a WFM (Woman Fide Master).

Already an age-group world champion, what makes the Bengaluru-based Charvi special is the way she's laser-focused in her chess. Even in a game where obsessives are dime-a-dozen, it's unheard of for somebody as young as her to set boundaries. For example, she has already told her parents to not reveal the identity of her coach (she has worked with Swayams Mishra and RB Ramesh in the past).

Her dedication also lies in her wanting to learn from her mistakes. After every game, she makes it a point to have a debrief with all of her opponents. "It can go on for 30 minutes also," her mother, Akhila, who left behind her IT job, says. She and her husband Anil Kumar had to rely on YouTube to understand the game and keep pace with their daughter.

Charvi A with her parents

Her parents were undecided on her daughter pursuing chess but after she won the Under-8 girls World Championship, they were sold on her obvious talents (post that, she also got the highest civilian award given to children for her chess exploits). They were okay pulling her out of school (she only visits to give term exams) apart from customising her training schedule. Apart from chess training, she also goes for swimming and badminton classes in the evening to ensure she gets some physical activity on a daily basis.

Charvi has had a mixed Open event but that's to be expected as the players she faces are either higher rated or have more experience. But it will stand her in good stead going forward. **P11**

**ALMANAC TODAY**
• **Monday:** 02.06.2025 • **Year:** Vishwavasu • **Ayana:** Uttarayana
• **Ritu:** Greeshma • **Masa:** Jyeshta • **Paksha:** Shukla • **Tithi:** Sapthami 11.56 pm
• **Nakshatra:** Makha 2.22 am • Moon in Kanya Rashi • **Rahukaala:** 07:30 am to 09:00 am
• **Gulikakala:** 01:30 pm to 03:00 pm • **Yamaganda:** 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

**WEATHER**
MIN 21°C | MAX 30°C
**FORECAST**
Showers late. Overcast

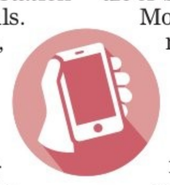
Sunrise 05.52 am
Sunset 06.43 pm
Moonrise 11.42 am
Moonset 12.24 am

# City traders seek QR codes to solve jurisdiction issues

Chickpet, City Market, and SJP Road fall under three police stations

**RISHITA KHANNA** @ Bengaluru

TRADERS and residents in Chickpet, City Market, and SJP Road are grappling with a critical issue: the lack of clear jurisdictional boundaries for both police and BBMP. According to the locals, this ambiguity is leading to delays and confusion when filing complaints or seeking urgent civic or law enforcement help. In a bid to solve this, they have proposed to install "QR-coded boards" throughout the area, which will help people locate the nearest police station and obtain contact details.



The mentioned areas, all dense commercial hubs with hundreds of wholesale and retail businesses, fall under the overlapping jurisdiction of three police stations— Halasuru Gate, Kalasipalyam, and City Market. Due to the absence of clear demarcation or signage, locals often struggle to figure out which station is responsible for a particular street or lane.

Residents have also urged BBMP to install clear boards in every lane mentioning ward jurisdiction and relevant contact details. It is expected that by installing these signage people will know where and how to register complaints, especially in cases of civic issues or security concerns.

"Recently, there was a theft in one of the godowns on SJP Road. The trader rushed to the nearest police station, but officers there told him the area fell under another station's limits. When he reached the second station, they redirected him to a third. The entire process is a waste of time, and often people don't even end up filing complaints," Kiran Kumar, a trader who has a textile shop in Chickpet, said.

"Leaving the shop in the middle of business hours is not easy. Most of us run shops with minimal staff. If something goes wrong and we step out to file a complaint, we waste hours. This kind of mismanagement only encourages more crime," Faiz, another shop owner claimed.

The problem is not limited to police matters. Residents and business owners say they face similar confusion while trying to report civic issues. "The BBMP helpline either redirects us or closes complaints without visiting the spot, saying it doesn't fall in their jurisdiction," Feroz Ahmed, a shpp owner in Chickpet, said.

"QR code is an affordable solution. It will precisely guide which police station one should go," Rahul Goyal, a trader said.

### Keep KR Market area clean: BBMP chief

Bengaluru: BBMP Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao instructed civic officials to keep the KR Market area clean and stressed the need for continuous maintenance and effective waste disposal during an inspection on Sunday. Maheshwar added that waste gene- rated within the market must be efficiently disposed of and directed marshals and supervisors to ensure cleanliness is maintained at all times without allowing garbage to be dumped indiscriminately. He also instructed that the surrounding roads and areas be cleaned using pressure jetting machines. He also asked officials to conduct a survey of the traders oper- ates in the market and take necessary action against those occupying space illegally. A master plan should be prepared for maintain tainance, he added. He raised concerns about seized vehicles parked in the parking area and ordered their removal. He asked for coordination with the traffic police to clear abandoned vehicles. **ENS**

# Metro work adds to chaos in Babusapalya

**INDRA S** @Bengaluru

ONGOING metro construction near the Babusapalya bus stop adjacent to the Outer Ring Road (ORR) has worsened traffic congestion and created daily hurdles for pedestrians. With the demolition of a key skywalk, crossing the high-speed, high-volume vehicles the road is becoming both difficult and dangerous for the public.

Even though the traffic police have installed a pedestrian signal and deployed two personnel to help pedestrians navigate through easily, safe crossing remains elusive.

"We have to wait for nearly 10 minutes for the pedestrian signal to go green. We cannot cross the road even after the green signal, as few of the vehicle users don't care to stop," complained Kumar, a pedestrian.

When *TNIE v*isited the area, traffic personnel were seen physically signalling vehicles to stop, in addition to the functioning signal, but many motorists continued to ignore the instructions. It was also observed that the signal was manually controlled during the day and switched to automatic mode during the night.

Pedestrians struggle to cross as motorists ignore traffic rules near Babusapalya Metro construction site in Bengaluru, on Sunday | ALLEN EGENUSE J

"I find it hard to cross this road at night after work. Even during the day, when traffic personnel are around and the pedestrian signal is on, vehicles rarely stop. At night, it's worse, no one bothers to stop, even when the pedestrian signal goes green," lamented Deepa, a regular commuter.

"BMRCL informed us that their construction would take around six months, which required dismantling the existing skywalk. To ensure pedestrian safety, we put in place a temporary arrangement," said traffic inspector (Banaswadi) Girish. He added, "After our personnel complete their shift, the manually controlled pedestrian signal switches to automatic mode. We had also installed AI cameras to curb reckless driving, but they had to be removed due to the ongoing construction. We are plan ning to reinstall them soon."

The Namma Metro Blue Line, currently under construction, will run along the ORR, connecting Silk Board to Kempegowda International Airport.

### CAKES TO MUFFINS, KMF LAUNCHES NEW LINE OF BAKERY PRODUCTS

Bengaluru: Marking World Milk Day on Sunday, the Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) launched a new line of bakery products under the Nandini Goodlife brand, including 18 varieties of muffins, slice cakes, and bar cakes. The newly introduced bakery products are part of KMF's push to replace private-brand items in its Nandini parlours with in-house offerings. First introduced in January 2021 with bread and buns, the federation now expanded to include dairy-enriched baked goods like cakes and muffins. Key products in the new range include slice cakes in fruit, vanilla, pineapple, and choco-orange flavours, available in 30g and 50g packs, priced between Rs 15 and Rs 20. Vanilla sponge cake priced at Rs 10. The event, held at the KMF headquarters, also featured a Nandini Paneer Cooking Competition, where winners were felicitated by KMF managing director B Shivaswamy. Shivaswamy said that the products are being launched in attractive packaging to attract children and also to compete with similar brands and will soon be available in Nandini parlours across Karnataka. **ENS**

# Fix dropout rate in high schools: Assn to govt

**ENS** @ Bengaluru

POINTING to the high dropout rate of 22.1% among high school students in Karnataka, which is much higher than the national average of 14.1%, the People's Alliance for Fundamental Right to Education (PAFRE) has written to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, asking him to focus on solving "long-term" problems in the education system instead of blaming officials for the poor SSLC results.

PAFRE welcomed the CM's concern, expressed during a recent review meeting, over the fall in SSLC pass percentages, especially in backward regions like Kalyana Karnataka. However, the group said that reprimanding education officers alone won't help improve results. Instead, it stressed the need to improve the overall learning system from Class 1 to Class 10, especially in government and aided schools where most children come from poor and disadvantaged families.

Chief convenor of the group Professor Niranjanaradhya VP explained that exam results are just the final stage and if children do not receive quality education and support from the beginning, expecting better results is unfair. He added that the current system does not give students the learning environment, teachers, and leadership.

"Karnataka's high school dropout rate must be addressed immediately if the government wants to see long-term improvements," he said.

The RTE group asked the state government to prepare a three-year action plan to bring all schools up to standard.

# Tallest Vishnu idol in Ejipura to be consecrated today

108 feet Maha Vishu statue at Ejjipura in Bengaluru Saturday | I VINOD KUMAR T

**RAKSHITH GOWDA** @ Bengaluru

A 108-feet-tall monolithic statue of Lord Vishnu, the tallest in the world, in his Vishwaroopam, will be consecrated (Pran Prathistha) in Ejipura on Monday. The 420-tonne monolith stone, quarried from Tamilnadu's Thiruvannamalai, was brought to the city over a span of six-months, crossing multiple hurdles, on 240-wheel truck in 2019.

The man behind the monolithic statue is Dr B Sadanand, a retired government doctor, who started working on the project since 2010. The doctor wants the statue to serve as a beacon of spiritual unity and cultural heritage.

Works for the Vishwaroopam statue, claimed to be the tallest in this avatar, commenced in 2010, with the first phase involving pre-erection work and sculpting of the main deity and Adishesha. The total cost of completing the statue, which included completion of the sculpture, polishing, crane work, building frame for the statue and other civil works is Rs 2.60 crore.

Devotees in Ejipura are rushing to witness the long-awaited Viraata Swaroopa of Lord Vishnu. Homas and havans were started from Saturday and the main Prana Prathistha homa and Mahakumbabisheka (consecration ceremony) will be held on Monday. The seer of Udupi's Pejawar Mutt Sri Vishwaprasanna and Sri Abhinava Vageesha from Mysuru's Parakala mutt will take part in the ceromony.

"The sculpture is the first-of-its kind and distinct from other forms of Lord Vishnu statues installed so far. The 'Shiva Keshava Swaroopam' of the Supreme Lord, features several arms and heads representing--Maha Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma, Skanda, Vinayaka, Narasimha, Anjaneya, Garuda, Agni, and Rishi Muni," those involved in the project explained.

The Kodanda Ramaswamy Temple Charitable Trust supervised the project. They said the statue stands to create unity among the followers of Hinduism.

# Greens, citizens join hands for revival of Kumudvathi

**GAYATHRI M KURUP** @ Bengaluru

ONCE lifelines to the city, the rivers Arkavathi and Kumudvathi quietly flow through Bengaluru's history.

While Arkavathi has faded, Kumudvathi is also becoming on the verge of extinction. And on this World Environment Day (June 5), artists, environmentalists, and citizens will gather on its banks for Kumudvathi Revival, an event dedicated to protecting and remembering the river.

The event will be held at Guruskool, a cultural space located along the banks of Kumudvathi river. "People have forgotten that this river exists," said Gopal Navale, director of Guruskool and a member of the artist collective 'Kala Yatri', the organiser of the event. "We want to change that not just through facts and speeches, but through shared experience and art."

Kumudvathi Revival, taking place on June 5, will feature talks by experts like hydrologist Yale Lingaraju, who has mapped the river in detail and studied its underground water channels. There will also be the launch of a new book authored by a Kalayatri artist, and a live performance of the rain song "Male Male" by Blues Ghat.

The core of the gathering is the concern over a recent government proposal to reduce the protected buffer zone around the river from 1 kilometer to just 30 metres— a move which could allow real estate and industrial encroachment, endangering the river's already fragile state.

"This buffer zone was meant to protect the river's catchment," Navale said. "If it shrinks, the Kumudvati would vanish like Arkavathy and become a drain, filled with sewage."

"As the city grew bigger, the urban encroachment around Nandi Hills and all along that side increased which lead to the death of river. There is still some traces of life at Kumudvathi, and we have to save her. And for the last 20 years, a lot of people have been working to bring back life to this river," he added.

**EXPRESS READ**

### No leopard sighted in Thalaghattapura: Foresters

Bengaluru: After a day-long combing operation, on Sunday the Leopard Task Force in Mallasandra informed that there were no signs of leopard movement. Range Forest Officer N R Kamble said no leopard was spotted after the search was launched after two eyewitness saying the big cat was sighted near a wood factory around 9.15 am on Saturday. **ENS**

### KEA UGCET-25 rank list to be published after 2 pm today

Bengaluru: The Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) announced that the UGCET-25 rank list will be published after 2 pm on Monday. The results will include scores of students who appeared for the second PUC as well as those who had applied for revaluation. The combined results will be made available on the KEA website. **ENS**

### 102 visitors take guided tour of Vidhana Soudha on opening day

Bengaluru: Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation's newly launched guided tour of Vidhana Soudha witnessed a strong start with 102 people taking part on Sunday. A total of four slots were provided two in English and two in Kannada. The English slot was full, and out of 120 tourists, 102 participated in the tour. **ENS**

# Daily Starscope

**PETER VIDAL**

**02ND June : In one of my old books I read that today's sparky planetary pattern forecasts the following scenario: 'political activity, debates, meetings and sometimes much excitement, but hindrances and complicated situations develop, and the Government is not fortunate. There will be strange cases in the law courts.' Don't say I didn't warn you!**

**ARIES** (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
One of your major skills is your ability to understand the broader picture, but today you should swing to the opposite extreme and examine every single detail, otherwise you're liable to overlook something vital. Perhaps a partner can show you the way forward.

**TAURUS** (Apr. 21 - May 21)
Make sure you have an enjoyable day. The Moon's position suggests that what oriental sages have been saying for centuries is true: even routine and humdrum activities can be satisfying if accomplished with the right attitude. Go on - try it!

**GEMINI** (May 22 - June 21)
Domestic and family responsibilities are likely to be most pressing today. Even if you're at work, the best way to complete all your responsibilities will be to generate a family atmosphere. If everyone knows their place, they'll do the best job.

**CANCER** (June 22 - July 23)
Good communication seems to be awfully important, and you'll have to realise that if you don't attend to all practical complexities yourself, others are likely to step in - and get it all wrong. Take the responsibility for putting your own plans into action.

**LEO** (July 24 - Aug. 23)
Current discussions over finances are likely to be linked to past emotional dramas, in which case it may be difficult to see the way forward. Don't act free and easy with other people's cash, by the way, because they're bound to notice sooner or later!

**VIRGO** (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)
The Moon is happily ensconced in a friendly region of your chart today, so you should be able to take life as you find it. You'll be slightly more emotional than usual, and this means that you may be more compassionate to others' suffering, but also more likely to take offence.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)
Keep yourself to yourself if that is what you want. You may have to put on a performance in public, but what is truly important is what's happening in your sub-conscious. The decisions you take now will shape your affairs over the next four weeks.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)
Powerful social planets suggest that now is the time for team-work and co-operation. Don't try to go it alone for, if you do, you'll run the risk of shooting yourself in the foot. Make the most of children's enthusiasm, and do what you can to shape their energies positively.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 23 - Dec. 22)
It's time to be ambitious, and not to be ashamed about it! It's no over-statement to say that even apparently trivial developments over the coming days and weeks could change your career direction for good, so there's no room at all for complacency.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 23 - Jan. 20)
If you still feel confused, hurt or angry, it's because recent traumas are still being stirred up by other people. However, over the next few weeks, you will gradually understand that what has happened has been for the best. It's just that it might not have been what you were expecting.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)
You may try to distance yourself from any colleagues who make you feel upset or angry, and concentrate on important things like boosting your income, and setting yourself up for future prosperity. It's time to look after number one - and, when you've taken care of yourself, you can think about others.

**PISCES** (Feb. 20 - Mar 20)
You may decide once and for all where you would be happiest and who you'd rather be with. Only then will you be able to concentrate your energies, maximise your advantages and make life better for you and your loved ones. And if a change of job is called for, then so be it!

Solutions to Saturday's puzzle

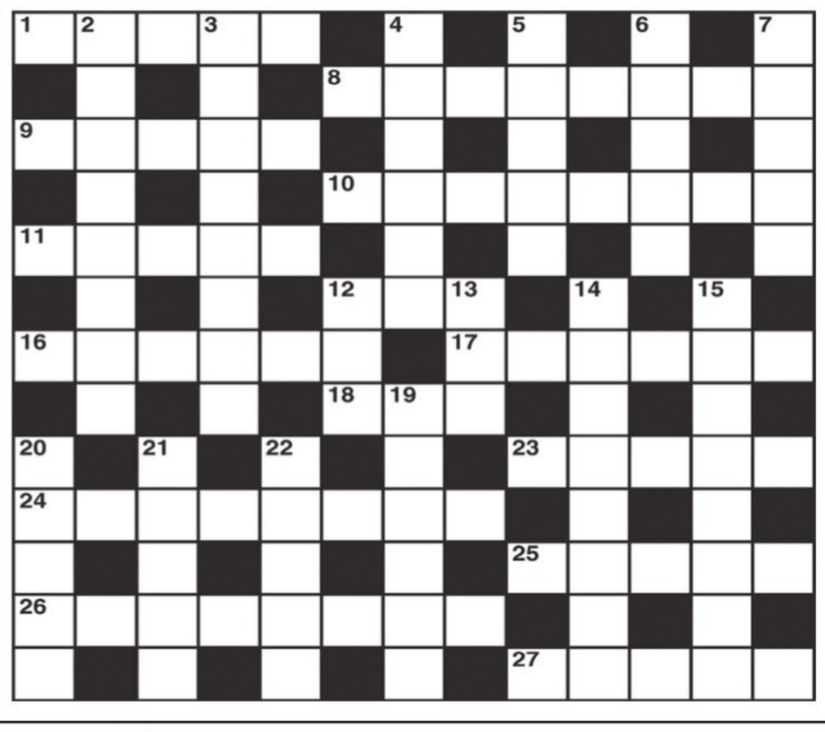
| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 8 | | | 5 | | | |
| 4 | 3 | 6 | | 2 | | | | |
| | 7 | | | 3 | | | 1 | 6 |
| 6 | | 3 | | | | | 7 | |
| | | | 3 | | 9 | | | |
| | 2 | | | | | 6 | | 3 |
| 1 | 5 | | | 8 | | | 3 | |
| | | | | 9 | | 7 | 8 | 5 |
| | | | 5 | | | 9 | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 2 |
| 6 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 5 |
| 5 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 6 |
| 3 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 9 |
| 4 | 9 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| 8 | 5 | 2 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| 9 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 8 |
| 1 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 7 | 3 |
| 2 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 4 |

**SU DO KU HARD**

**TEST YOUR NUMBER CRUNCHING SKILL WITH OUR UNIQUE PUZZLE**

Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



**CROSS WORD**

**ACROSS**
1 Wet branch (5)
8 Pat his arm in error (8)
9 Pity's stirred by those influenced by drink (5)
10 Hesitated in speech being handicapped (8)
11 There is nothing in Shakespeare about daily meals (5)
12 Wood used in barrel-making (3)
16 Fast movers by morning found at sea (6)
17 A fair fighter? (6)
18 Vessel coming out of Melbourne (3)
23 Sheer drop into the water (5)
24 First phase of the Stone Age (5,3)
25 Straighten robes like a judge (5)
26 Read news letters out or corresponded (8)
27 I'd the wrong name for a girl (5)

**DOWN**
2 A restrained person (8)
3 Busts are developed but not easily perceived (8)
4 Gold transaction comes to trial (6)
5 American needs time for practice (5)
6 It may develop into friendship (5)
7 A poem that could shock (5)
12 It cannot fly in the murky gloom (3)
13 An old boy (3)
14 The final verdict on most recent fashion (4,4)
15 Part of The Clock symphony? (8)
19 Track for an athlete (6)
20 Attempt to get south in easy moves (5)
21 Graduates thus as a singer (5)
22 Surrounded like European capital in defeat (5)

**SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS**

**Across:** 1 Artichokes, 6 Adam, 10 Corgi, 11 Spin a yarn, 12 Constant, 13 Owner, 15 Risible, 17 Epitaph, 19 Nostrum, 21 Changes, 22 Ultra, 24 Doodling, 27 Clockwise, 28 Going, 29 Done, 30 Perpetuate.

**Down:** 1 Arch, 2 Tortoises, 3 Cries, 4 On stage, 5 Epistle, 7 Drawn, 8 Monarchist, 9 Carolina, 14 Pronounced, 16 Barracks, 18 Argentina, 20 Midwife, 21 Close-up, 23 Thorn, 25 Light, 26 Ague.

**JUMBLE**

**UNSCRAMBLE THESE JUMBLES, ONE LETTER TO EACH SQUARE, TO FORM FOUR ORDINARY WORDS.**

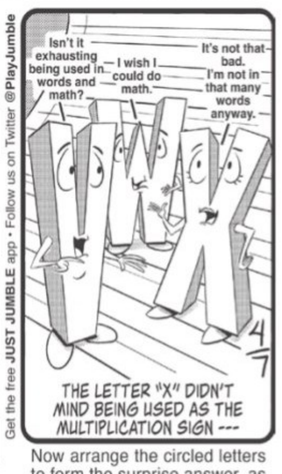
BY DAVID L. HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

ELFTE

PHYPA

FRIHTT

BSTMIU


Isn't it exhausting being used in words and math?
I wish I could do math.
It's not that bad. I'm not in that many words anyway.
THE LETTER "X" DIDN'T MIND BEING USED AS THE MULTIPLICATION SIGN ---
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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

*Print answer here:* ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: THUMP SHAME FAIRLY EXPORT
Answer: The problem with his ears was just wax buildup, which he was — HAPPY TO HEAR

# Film producer Babu booked for allegations of fraud

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

AN FIR has been filed against Kannada film producer Soorappa Babu for allegedly cheating a woman of Rs 67.5 lakh under the pretext of producing a film.

According to the complaint, the woman claimed that Babu took Rs 92.5 lakh from her in phases in 2023, saying he was producing a film directed by K S Ravikumar and starring Shivarajkumar and Ganesh.

However, after receiving the money, Babu became unreachable within a month. When she made enquiries, she discovered that no such project involving the said actors was underway.

Upon confronting Babu, he returned Rs 25 lakh but refused to repay the remaining Rs 67.5 lakh. The FIR states that he told her, "I don't have the money to return. Do whatever you want," and allegedly issued threats.

The woman alleged that Babu misused her trust and made false promises of film collaborations. Based on her complaint, a case of cheating and criminal intimidation has been registered at the Amruthahalli police station.

Police said they are verifying the financial transactions and will issue a notice to Babu for questioning.

Babu is known for producing films such as Kotigobba, Prithvi, and Kotigobba 2.

# Woman held for assaulting auto driver with slipper

## Auto unions, other groups demand her expulsion from city

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

A 28-year-old woman from Bihar was arrested on Sunday for allegedly assaulting an autorickshaw driver with her slipper following a minor collision.

The incident occurred on Bellandur Central Mall Road on Saturday afternoon. She was later released on station bail. The auto drivers' union in the city condemned the woman's action.

The accused was identified as Pankhuri Mishra. She is working for an IT firm and staying at a paying guest accommodation on Bellandur Road. A video of the incident shows the woman caught on camera assaulting the auto driver after a traffic dispute. She claimed that the autorickshaw had hit her vehicle, but the driver repeatedly denied the allegation, saying, "You can check the CCTV footage. I didn't even touch your vehicle." The argument escalated when the woman removed her slipper and began hitting the driver multiple times. In the video, she is heard saying, "Make a video! Do whatever you can." Bystanders later intervened and questioned her for the assault.

A video grab of the woman assaulting the autorickshaw driver

According to the police, based on a complaint filed by auto driver Lokesh, a resident of Dodda Somanahalli, Pankhuri was summoned for questioning on Sunday morning and was arrested. During interrogation, she claimed that she was pregnant and that the auto had collided with her scooter, leading to the confrontation. The police added that sudden provocation led her to assault and abuse the driver. She was booked under various sections of the BNS and later released on station bail on Sunday.

Various auto unions and pro-Kannada outfits condemned the woman's action. Some groups even staged protests outside the police station, demanding strict action and calling for her expulsion from the city.

# BMTC driver suspended after attempt to run over woman

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @BENGALURU

A Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) bus driver has been suspended after he allegedly attempted to run over a woman who was arguing with him following a collision. The incident took place near the Cubbon Park police station on the evening of May 23.

According to a press release issued by BMTC, the driver, Prashanth, has been placed under suspension pending a departmental inquiry. A BMTC bus (KA 57 F 2046) operating on the JJ Nagar–Nagavara route was involved in a minor collision. The rear right side of the bus came into contact with the front portion of a car approaching from behind near the Cubbon Park police station on May 23, around 5.40 pm.

Following the collision, the woman driver blocked the BMTC bus at a signal and confronted the driver. Prashanth allegedly attempted to move the vehicle forward while the woman was still standing in front of it, the press release stated.

A complaint regarding the incident has been registered at the Cubbon Park traffic police station.

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Hono'ble Chief Minister, Government of Karnataka

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
National Health Mission

Shri D.K. Shivakumar
Hon'bleChief Ministers, Government of Karnataka

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

Workshop and Inauguration Ceremony of the Gruha Arogya Initiative

Date: 02-06-2025 Time 11:00 AM

Venue: Vikas Soudha, Bengaluru

- DIABETES
- HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE
- ORAL CANCER
- BREAST CANCER
- CERVICAL CANCER
- DIABETIC FOOT
- DIABETIC RETINOPATHY
- MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS
- NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS
- SLEEP APNEA
- CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE
- CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE
- NON-ALCOHOLIC FATTY LIVER DISEASE
- ANAEMIA

Wider Reach of Gruha Arogya

Healthcare services, near your home

to Control Non-Communicable Diseases

Screening and managing 14 non-communicable diseases for people aged 30+ in rural areas.

Raising awareness about NCDs via door-to-door visits by health workers.

Promoting lifestyle changes and AYUSH medicine for NCD control and treatment.

Providing free, continuous medication and early detection to reduce complications and deaths.

It shall be the duty of every citizen of India to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India

Your Health, Our Priority

Industries Minister MB Patil said the proposal to increase the height of Almatti dam can be considered only after a feasibility study. He, however, said he was not aware of any such proposal. The minister said before taking any decision, legal and technical experts should be consulted

# BREATHING EASY, BY PREPARING WELL

The virus is back but do not fear. It is only a trickle. Karnataka is not waiting for the numbers to explode but is more prepared than ever, having acted early — not in panic, but with the intent to avoid it altogether

RISHITA KHANNA @Bengaluru

JUST a few hundred fresh Covid-19 cases may not set off panic yet — but what happens if the numbers suddenly double or triple, like they did before? Are we really ready this time?

A reality check by TNIE reveals that Karnataka is not taking any chances. After witnessing the devastation caused by previous Covid-19 waves, particularly the oxygen crisis during the second wave, the health and medical education department are moving swiftly to ensure that critical infrastructure built during the pandemic doesn't fall into disuse.

Take the Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) oxygen generating plants, for instance. During the peak of the pandemic, 243 such plants were installed across district and taluk hospitals to ensure a steady oxygen supply. Each plant came with an annual maintenance cost of around Rs 5 lakh. In the months that followed, as Covid cases declined, many of these units were neglected and became defunct. But now, with cases gradually rising again in neighbouring countries and also within Karnataka, the state has reactivated most of these plants. District health officials have been instructed to carry out maintenance checks and ensure they are fully operational — a move that seems like a lesson learnt against the overall scramble seen during earlier waves.

The state has kept its systems warm — from oxygen infrastructure and isolation wards to rapid testing capabilities — and officials say they are prepared to scale up within days if required. Rather than treating preparedness as a "crisis-only" strategy, the state is treating it as a permanent feature of its health system. The panic button has been pressed early — not because the situation is dire yet, but because the cost of being unprepared is one the state cannot afford to repeat, officials say.

### BENGALURU

Bengaluru, which bore the brunt of Karnataka's Covid-19 caseload and fatalities during the second wave — with bodies piling up at crematoriums and patients gasping for oxygen — has taken steps to ensure it doesn't relive that crisis. Major government hospitals like Victoria, Bowring and ESIC have conducted readiness drills and kept both liquid oxygen and PSA plants in working condition, though PSA units remain a backup due to lower oxygen purity.

### DHARWAD

During the peak of the second Covid-19 wave in 2021, Dharwad was among the worst-hit districts in Karnataka, recording a high number of deaths in a short span. Between July 2 and 8 that year, the district reported 40 deaths from just 164 cases — a fatality rate of over 24%. Back then, the district hospital struggled with limited oxygen supply and had only a 6 KL capacity plant. With inadequate infrastructure, patients were often referred to KIMS in Hubballi.

Currently, the district appears better prepared. The government hospital now has a 13 KL oxygen plant installed two years ago, and four technicians along with representatives from the supplying company conduct regular checks to keep it running. "We have 23 ventilators and 179 oxygen-supported beds, all in working condition. These are being used regularly for inpatients not just from Dharwad, but also from Savadatti, Kittur, Gadag, Naragund, and Haveri," said District Surgeon Dr Sangappa Gabi. At the taluk level, six ventilators had been supplied, and 90% of them remain functional.

### BALLARI

Ballari was another worst-affected district during the second wave of Covid-19, recording one of the highest fatality rates in the state. The district struggled with delayed case reporting, overwhelmed hospitals, and inadequate oxygen supply, which pushed up mortality during that period. Now, the government hospitals, including the Ballari Institute of Medical Sciences (BIMS), have retained and are actively using equipment procured during the pandemic. The district currently has 330 ventilators, enough oxygen cylinders, and Covid-19 treatment kits in place. The ventilators and beds received during the pandemic are now being used for regular patients.

### DAKSHINA KANNADA

Dakshina Kannada district in Karnataka experienced a 2.2% Covid-19 case fatality rate, significantly higher than the national average of 1.5%. This alarming statistic was partly attributed to the influx of patients from neighboring districts, leading to late-stage admissions and increased mortality. In response to these challenges, the district has bolstered its healthcare infrastructure to manage potential future surges. The district hospital is equipped with a 6 KL Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) plant, a 13 KL LMO plant, and three PSA oxygen plants, all installed during the pandemic. Taluk hospitals are similarly prepared, each housing 10 ICU beds and maintaining 70 to 80 jumbo oxygen cylinders, with an additional 15 standby cylinders regularly refilled to ensure a continuous supply.

### KALABURAGI

Kalaburagi, the district that reported India's first Covid death in March 2020 — a 76-year-old man returning from Saudi Arabia — has since bolstered its healthcare infrastructure to manage potential future outbreaks. The Gulbarga Institute of Medical Sciences (GIMS) has designated 20 beds for COVID-19 patients, including 10 general beds, 5 High Dependency Unit (HDU) beds, and 5 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds. Additionally, taluk hospitals have been instructed to reserve six beds each for COVID-19 cases. Oxygen generation units are operational at GIMS, ESIC Hospital, MRMC Hospital, and KBN Hospital, ensuring adequate oxygen supply.

Districts like Shivamogga, Belagavi, Hassan and Udupi, which had struggled during the peak of the pandemic with oxygen shortages, lack of ICU beds, and patient referrals to larger centres, have now strengthened their infrastructure to handle any possible resurgence. In Shivamogga, which had faced challenges during the second wave, dedicated oxygen plants and ICU wards set up during the pandemic are now fully operational. Belagavi, once among the districts with high positivity rates, has kept its ventilator-equipped Covid wards on standby and is utilising the PSA plants and oxygen beds that were established earlier. Hassan, which saw a severe surge in 2021 with high fatality rates, has ensured that its district and taluk hospitals are equipped with functioning oxygen units and isolation wards. Similarly, Udupi, which had battled rising cases during both waves, has prepared a special Covid ward, maintained its ventilators, and continues to run mock drills to remain ready.

*With inputs from Mallikarjun Hiremath from Dharwad, Kiran Balannanavar from Ballari, Prajna GR from Madikeri, Divya Cutinho from Mangaluru, V Velayudham from Kolar, Ramkrishna Badseshi from Kalaburagi, Prakash Samaga from Udupi, Udaya Kumar from Hassan, Tushar A Majukar from Belagavi, Ramachandra Gunari from Shivamogga*

**MANY HURDLES IN KODAGU**

KODAGU district has not reported any Covid-19 cases yet, but its preparedness faces serious hurdles. While a 15-bed Covid ward and 50 functional ventilators are in place at the District Hospital, and taluk hospitals are similarly equipped, a key infrastructure gap remains – the Rs 1.5 crore Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) oxygen plant lies dysfunctional due to prolonged neglect and lack of maintenance. Despite being under repair, no concrete steps have been taken to restore this crucial oxygen supply unit. Staff shortages compound the problem. The district's limited medical personnel may struggle to respond effectively in a surge, though 13 senior doctors have been temporarily appointed at Kodagu Institute of Medical Sciences to partially ease the strain. Further complicating the situation, Covid care will continue in the old hospital building since the new facility remains incomplete, pending tender finalizations for essential equipment installation.

BIG PICTURE

We have already held meetings with officials from every district to ensure preparedness. Hospitals have also been instructed to conduct mock drills and stay ready to handle any situation

Dr BL Sujatha Rathod, Director, Medical Education

Experts say this is a mild variant and will become part of normal life, much like the flu. However, we are closely monitoring vulnerable groups and those with compromised immunity to ensure there are no casualties

Dinesh Gundu Rao, Minister for Health

### TRACKING THE VIRUS

| | |
|---|---|
| 253 | Active cases |
| 04 | Fatalities |
| 279 | Number of tests |
| 257 | RTPCR |
| 19 | Rapid Antigen |

Number of Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) oxygen generating plants in state: 243

The liquid oxygen and PSA plants have been revived and are fully operational. The hospital is equipped to handle the current patient load and can scale up further if the situation demands — Dr Deepak S, Medical Superintendent of Victoria Hospital, Bengaluru

**LEAVING NOTHING TO CHANCE**

Minister for Health Dinesh Gundu Rao told TNIE that the state health department has held three meetings with the Covid-19 Technical Advisory Committee

District-level reviews have been conducted to ensure the availability of oxygen, beds, and other essential resources

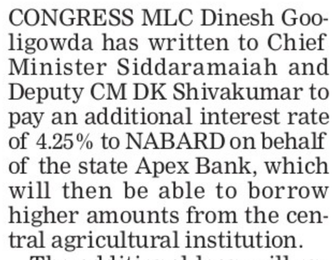
# MLC wants govt to pay addl interest to NABARD

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

CONGRESS MLC Dinesh Gooligowda has written to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM DK Shivakumar to pay an additional interest rate of 4.25% to NABARD on behalf of the state Apex Bank, which will then be able to borrow higher amounts from the central agricultural institution.

The additional loan will enable the Apex Bank, DCC banks and primary societies to conduct business sustainably and provide necessary services to farmers. Every year, NABARD provides loans to DCC banks through the Apex Bank at low interest rates. DCC Banks provide loans to farmers through primary agricultural cooperative societies in their jurisdiction, Gowda pointed out in his letter.

Last year, NABARD provided Rs 5,450 crore loan to the Apex Bank at 4% interest rate. But this time, NABARD has limited the amount that can be borrowed at 4% to Rs 2,700 crore. "For additional loans, it charges 8.25% interest," he stated. These restrictions will lead to capital shortage for the Apex Bank and DCC banks and affect distribution of loans to farmers for the kharif season. This will in turn affect the foodgrain production targets for the year, he wrote.



Minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar meets AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge at the latter's residence in in Sadashivanagar, Bengaluru, on Sunday

# Laxmi meets Kharge, triggers speculation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

Women and Child Development Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar on Sunday called on AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and discussed political developments in the state as well as issues regarding her department, especially the Gruha Lakshmi guarantee.

"There is nothing special about meeting Kharge. It was a courtesy call," she claimed after visiting the senior party leader at his residence in Sadashivanagar. Though it is normal for leaders to meet the national party president and seek his blessings, her visit assumes significance as she is considered a loyalist of DCM DK Shivakumar. "I discussed a whole lot of issues with Kharge. I met him after many days. Even when I went to Delhi last time, I could not find Kharge sahab. We need his guidance. Our department and guarantee schemes were discussed," she said.

"Kharge inquired about my health and asked if I was touring districts. He especially sought information about the Gruha Lakshmi scheme, besides asking me about the functioning of the department. He wanted to know whether the guarantee scheme money was reaching eligible women," she added.

She promised that April's Gruha Lakshmi money, which was pending, will soon be disbursed to beneficiaries.

HEMAVATHY CANAL PROTEST

# FIR against 3 MLAs, 2 religious heads

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Tumakuru

THE Gubbi police have booked three legislators and two religious heads among others for Saturday's protest opposing the Hemavathy Express canal, a pet project of Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar.

FIRs were registered against 11 people, including Turuvekere MLA MT Krishnappa of JDS, Tumakuru Rural MLA B Suresh Gowda and city MLA GB Jyothiganesh, both from BJP. The FIRs mentioned two khavi-wearing persons (religious heads), but did not name them. Some non-bailable charges were also included in the FIRs as one of the police personnel was severely injured.

They were charged under Sections 191, 115(2), 121(1), 132, 189(2), 190, 223, 351(2) and 352 of BNS.

It's alleged that they gathered unlawfully at the project site at Sunkapura, indulged in rioting, voluntarily caused hurt to the public servant by throwing stones and deterred them from discharging their duties, among others.

The protesters had alleged that Shivakumar was diverting the canal to take water to his home district Ramanagara.

On Friday, thousands of people protested and blocked the Bengaluru-Shivamogga-Honnavara NH-206 at the project site at Sunkapura in Gubbi taluk. They set tyres on fire besides deflating the tyres of KSRTC buses, creating inconvenience to passengers.

Shivakumar claimed that 40% of the work has been completed and the Rs 1,500 crore project cannot be stalled at this stage. It's being implemented after the technical committee submitted its report, Tumakuru district in-charge and Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara claimed.

Union Minister of State for Jal Shakti V Somanna had written to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to stop the project, calling it "unscientific".

Congress MLA from Gubbi ST Srinivas on Sunday said he too will oppose the project. "I will meet Shivakumar and raise the issue as the project will affect farmers of Tumakuru district," he told reporters.

### 'Attempt to murder inspector'

In a separate FIR, BJP leader Dilip Kumar and his supporters Rakesh, Koushik and hundreds of others were booked on charges of attempt to murder under Section 109 of BNS. Turuvekere Police Circle Inspector Lohith BN was injured severely in stone throwing. He was shifted to Siddaganga hospital in Tumakuru.

### RSS-BJP turning parts of K'taka into laboratories of hate, says Priyank

Bengaluru: Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge on Saturday slammed the Union government, questioning whether India's foreign policy has been compromised to align with US interests. Speaking to reporters here, Kharge wondered why US President Donald Trump, whom Prime Minister Narendra Modi once called his "friend", was now commenting on the Kashmir issue, a matter he stressed is strictly bilateral. "Why is this government internationalising a bilateral issue?" Kharge asked. "Why is Prime Minister Modi silent on this? Has our nation's foreign policy, as a sovereign nation, been pledged to the US?" He further questioned the frequent overseas visits by members of the ruling party, asking, "All those who have gone to so many countries, are they meeting heads of state or heads of government? Whom are they really meeting?" Kharge also renewed his criticism of the RSS and BJP, accusing them of turning parts of Karnataka, including Coastal Karnataka, Malnad, Hubli-Dharwad and Belagavi into "laboratories of hate". "The Sangh Parivar and its affiliates have never prioritised creating jobs, but have instead focused on spreading hatred," he said. "What is especially ironic is that they don't send their own children to participate in this enforcement of hate but send the children of the poor and underprivileged to do so." **ENS**

# Following landslides, min orders study on 'carrying capacity' of Western Ghats

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

IN response to recent landslides in Dakshina Kannada, Kodagu, and other parts of Karnataka during the pre-monsoon rains, Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Eshwar B Khandre has directed officials to assess the carrying capacity of the Western Ghats and submit a detailed report within three months.

In a written directive dated May 27, to the Additional Chief Secretaries of Forest, Ecology and Environment Department, the Minister highlighted experts' concerns that increasing road and infrastructure projects in the ecologically sensitive Western Ghats are endangering the region.

"The ongoing development is believed to be contributing to soil instability, resulting in damage to property, crops, wildlife, and human life," he said in the note. Experts, scientists and nature lovers have also warned that continued degradation of the Western Ghats could lead to severe water shortages in the future, Khandre said. Acting on this, the Minister has instructed the Member Secretary of the Biodiversity Board, officials from the Evaluation, Planning, Research and Training wing in Karnataka, and the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests to conduct a joint study.

The Western Ghats, a biodiversity hot spot, accounts for 60% of Karnataka's forest cover and supports a rich variety of flora, fauna and insect species.

Minister Khandre stressed the Ghats' critical role in influencing monsoon patterns and underscored the urgent need for their preservation.

In a recent incident, at least four persons, including three children, died and three others were feared drowned after heavy and continuous rainfall triggered landslides and flash floods across Mangaluru on Friday. Three of them died after a portion of land fell on their house when a huge mango tree got uprooted at Montepadav in Manjanady near Deralakatte. A family of six lived in the house.

Three labourers were killed and three injured after a speeding tanker lost control and rammed into them while they were working on National Highway median near Itagi Cross in Kittu taluk in Belagavi district on Sunday morning

# AIADMK NAMES 2 SENIORS FOR RS, SAYS DMDK IN AGREEMENT

## Selects former MLAs Inbadurai and Dhanapal

**T MURUGANANDHAM** @Chennai

I S Inbadurai

M Dhanapal

THE AIADMK has decided to keep the two Rajya Sabha seats to itself and named senior functionaries and former MLAs of the party, I S Inbadurai and M Dhanapal, as candidates for the forthcoming elections to the Upper House.

AIADMK deputy general secretary K P Munusamy announced the candidates at the party headquarters on Sunday. Responding to a question, Munusamy said AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami had promised the DMDK a Rajya Sabha seat in 2026, and that the party stands by it. He claimed the DMDK would continue in the AIADMK-led alliance and had agreed to the current arrangement.

However, later in the day, DMDK general secretary Premalatha Vijayakant refused to confirm to reporters that the party would indeed continue in the AIADMK alliance, suggesting her displeasure at the Dravidian major's move.

Of the two candidates, Inbadurai (59) is secretary of the party's advocate wing and has been a criminal lawyer at the Madras High Court for the past three decades. He has played a prominent role in representing and safeguarding the AIADMK's interests in judicial and public fora. A Christian Nadar, he has appeared numerous times for AIADMK-related cases and secured verdicts in favour of the party.

Inbadurai had joined the AIADMK in 1983 and represented the Radhapuram Assembly constituency from 2016, until he lost the seat in the 2021 polls.

M Dhanapal (65) is a senior functionary of the party from the Dalit community, hailing from Puduppattinam near Kalpakkam in Chengalpattu district.

# Carbon credit trading lacks regulatory mechanism

**BOSKY KHANNA** @Bengaluru

TO control the green house gas emissions and reduce the impacts of global warming, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) recently released a notification on the carbon credit trading scheme, 2023, which defines the Indian carbon market framework. But experts and environment officials pointed that the method of regulation, calculation and interventions for improvement are not clearly defined.

An official from the state environment department explained to The New Indian Express: "The notification now standardises carbon trading and releases the basic definitions for banking and trading procedure. But how will the environment department regulate, control and monitor is not mentioned."

Vijay Mohan Raj, Principal Secretary, Ecology and Environment department said, earlier the entire carbon trading sector was not regulated and was like an open market for individuals and companies. Now it is being certified, but who will verify it is yet to be ascertained.

The MoEFCC issued the notification on April 16, 2025, while the rules were framed in 2023. The Act will come into effect from 2026.

"The concept is innovative. It is not just looking at reducing carbon emissions and footprint, but also creating a channel for trading. Through this the scope for industries, agricultural and horticultural sectors and framers to innovate and come up with new solutions to reduce methane and carbon emissions is being opened up," said BP Ravi, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Evaluation, Working Plan, Research and Training Wings, Karnataka Forest Department.

An official from the environment department explained, many farmers are now trying new techniques for crop cultivation with reduced water supply. For example, paddy is a water intensive crop. But in some regions, like Davengere, farmers are using wet and dry methods for crop cultivation. This has helped them in reducing methane generation and nutrient content in crops has increased. With this notification, the farmers' yield will be recognised and carbon credit scores will be given for further trading.

The official added that there are also companies whose carbon footprint is high. They reason that it cannot be reduced as it will effect their production. With this notification, these companies will have an opportunity to trade carbon with farmers so that their net emissions is neutralised. However the trade mechanism is yet to be finalised, the official added.

# Sheep prices soar ahead of Bakrid

**GAYATHRI M KURUP** @ Bengaluru

AS Bakrid approaches, the price of sheep in the market has seen a noticeable rise.

Compared to last year, rates have increased by Rs 100 to Rs 150 per kilogram. "This is due to the overall inflation in mutton prices this year," said Amrat, a sheep vendor who was busy with the business at a market at Tannery Road's Doddi Sheep market.

The price for live sheep now starts at Rs 450 per kg and goes up to Rs 800, depending on the breed and size.

According to a local vendor Syed Nazir, the Aminagad breed is currently priced at Rs 650 per kg, while the Bannur considered one of the most expensive breeds-is being sold at Rs 800 per kg. Other varieties include Beetal and Yelga, both priced at Rs 650 per kg, while local breeds from Andhra Pradesh's Chennur are available at Rs 450 per kg. These prices reflect the varying quality, size, and origin of each breed with local and Andhra-origin sheep generally falling in the lower price range.

The price of live sheep now starts at Rs 450 per kg and goes till Rs 800 | ALLEN EGENUSE J

Traders said they have more demand for Bannur and the Amingad breed, as they are known for tender meat. Amrat said that customers often look for cattles with prominent horns ideal for Qurbani (Sacrifice).

"Prices go up every year, especially around Bakrid, but we still buy cattle for Qurbani, to offer to our God," says Haseena, a customer. "We don't worry about the cost much at this time, we just want to choose the best one." she concludes.

# Bengaluru to see rainfall again from Wednesday

**RISHITA KHANNA** @ Bengaluru

AFTER several days of steady rain and gloomy skies, Bengaluru is experiencing a short break in the weather. However, this relief is likely to be brief, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicting a return of light showers and cloudy conditions by midweek.

From June 4, the city can expect a gradual change, starting with light rain on Wednesday, followed by more widespread showers on June 5 and 6. This, the IMD said, could mark the beginning of another wet spell for Bengaluru.

According to the IMD's Meteorological Centre in Bengaluru, the weather forecast for both Bengaluru Urban and Rural districts indicates mostly dry and partly cloudy skies until June 3. The situation is expected to shift midweek, with light to moderate rain likely on June 4, 5 and 6 under a generally cloudy sky. As per the officials from the weather agency, the weather in the past 24 hours showed no rainfall in either Bengaluru Urban or Rural areas. The forecast for the next five days, starting Monday, indicates maximum temperatures hovering around 30–31 degree Celsius and minimum temperatures around 20–22 degree Celsius across both urban and rural areas.

**Karnataka monsoon outlook**

Karnataka is currently witnessing an early and intense start to the monsoon season. Districts such as Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada could see intense downpours accompanied by thunderstorms and gusty winds. However, six districts in the south — including Bengaluru Urban, Bengaluru Rural, Kolar, Ramanagara, Chikkaballapura and Chamarajanagar — may see normal to slightly below-normal rainfall, although moderate showers are still expected.

EXPRESS READ

### 2 labourers held for murder of contractor

HASSAN : Two construction labourers from Bihar were arrested by the Arasikere police for allegedly murdering a labour contractor at the town within 36 hours of committing the crime. The accused, Vikram and Sachin, had reportedly fled with cash and jewellery belonging to the victim, Vijayakumar (49), after the murder on Friday. The two accused hit the victim on the head with a wooden log at the under construction site. They were caught at the Bengaluru railway station while waiting to board a train to New Delhi on Saturday night.

### Couple steals ₹1.7cr from businessman's house

BENGALURU : A Nepali couple allegedly stole 2 kg of gold, silver ornaments worth Rs 1.7 crore, Rs 10 lakh in cash, and a pistol from a businessman's house. The incident took place in Shastrinagar on May 27. The police said that the accused are a Nepali couple—Raj, a security guard, and Deepa, a domestic help—working at the businessman's house. The theft happened when the owner, Ramesh Babu, left for Tirupati with his family, leaving the couple at home on May 27. The police said that they have launched a manhunt and are analysing CCTV.

# Search on to arrest the sixth accused

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ACTING on the parents' complaint, a police team headed by Inspector US Avati arrested five accused. The sixth accused is absconding and the search is on to arrest him.

Belagavi Police Commissioner Bhushan Gulab Rao Borase confirmed the arrest of five individuals in the gangrape case. "The victim and all the accused are originally from Belagavi district. One of the accused, who had developed a friendship with the girl, allegedly lured her into a trap where he and five others committed the crime," he said.

An FIR was registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act at the APMC Police Station on Saturday. The commissioner said the accused number 1 and 2 played the central role in the crime. "The maximum punishment for these charges is 20 years. But we will collect more evidence to get them higher punishment," he said.

This is the second case of a rape of a minor that has come to light in the district in the last one month. It has also put immediate pressure on Police Commissioner Bhushan Borse.

# Board should pay ₹1cr to family: MLA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Management representatives hold discussions with the agitating labourers

RAICHUR SP Puttamadaiah said that a case has been registered at the Hutti police station and senior police officers had visited the spot. Company Executive Director Prakash and other officials too visited the area of accident.

Protesting labourers demanded a compensation of Rs 1 crore to the family of the deceased and employment to one of his family members, as agreed upon between labourers and the company management during a similar incident last time.

Former MLA DS Hulageri too arrived at the company premises and got information. He said the company board and chairman will be asked to pay Rs 1 crore as compensation to the family of the deceased.

# No complaints of robbery on B'luru-Chennai Corridor: IGP

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** @ Kolar

WITH a viral video showing robbery attempts on the yet-to-be completed Bengaluru-Chennai Express Corridor, Inspector General of Police (Central Range) Labhuram has clarified that they have not received any such complaints. Only the stretch between Hoskote and Sundarapalya has been completed on the Express Corridor, sources said. In the last four months on the stretch, four fatal and two non-fatal accidents were reported under KGF police limits, three fatal and one non-fatal accident in the Kolar region and one fatal accident in Bengaluru Rural limits, sources said. Some people uploaded a video showing stones in the middle of the road in an alleged dacoity attempt and it went viral. An advocate from Bengaluru too has written to the director general and inspector general of police and to the authorities regarding safety on the corridor, sources said.

Labhuram told *TNIE* that vehicles have been moving on the stretch since February and KGF, Kolar and Bengaluru Rural police have jurisdiction over the road. All SPs concerned, KM Shantharaju of KGF, CK Bawa of Bengaluru Rural and B Nikhil of Kolar have deputed patrol teams on the highway 24x7, he said.

**IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE IX ADDL. DISTRICT & SESSIONS JUDGE, BANGALORE RURAL DISTRICT AT BANGALORE**

**Crl. A. No. 58/2025**

**Between : Sri. Harish .N.**, S/o. Nagereddy, Aged about 39 years, R/at. No.2/7, Bommandapalli Village, Kothagondapalli, Hosur Taluk, PIN-635109. **...Appellant**

**And : Sri. Prashanth .M.L. ...Respondent**

**NOTICE / SUMMONS TO RESPONDENT**

**Sri. Prashanth .M.L.** S/o. Late. V.M. Kurup, Aged about 52 years, R/at. No. 1543, 3rd Floor, 7th Cross, 19th Main, 1st Sector, HSR Layout, Bangalore-560 102.

Whereas, the appellant have filed the above Crl. Appeal against you for the relief of setting-aside the order dated 07-08-2023 in C.C. 20812/21 passed by the Hon'ble Chief Judicial Magistrate at Bangalore. You are hereby summoned to appear before this Hon'ble court in person or by a pleader **on 30.6.2025 at 11.00 a.m.** forenoon to answer the same failing which the appeal will be disposed in your absence, placing you ex-parte.

Given under my hand and the seal of the Court this the 31st day of May 2025.

**By order of the Court, Chief Administrative Officer, District & Sessions Court, Bangalore Rural District, Bangalore-560009.**

Advocate for Appellant :
**Sri. K. Akram Pasha,** Advocate
No. 10/1, 1st Floor, Faiz Complex, S.P. Road, Bangalore - 560 002. Mob. 94482 03870
Email: kapadvocate1@gmail.com

**IN THE COURT OF THE ADDITIONAL JUDGE COURT OF SMALL CAUSES AT MAYO HALL BANGALORE (SCCH-20)**

**MVC. No 444/2025**

**BETWEEN: Sri T Ramesh ... PETITIONER**

**AND: M/s New INDIA ASS Co Ltd**, and others ... **RESPONDENTS**

**NOTICE TO RESPONDENT No 2**

**Mr Vijay Christopher,** Aged about 32 years, S/o Sagayaraj.S, R/at No 2, 4th cross, 3rd main, Hanumantharayappa layout, Kyalasanahalli, Bangalore-77

Whereas, the petitioner in MVC 444/2025 has filed the above claim petition against the respondents seeking compensation for a sum of Rs 20,00,000/- an account of totally paralyzed of T.Ramesh, S/o Thashna, aged about 51 Years, R/at No.3, 1st Cross, Gajendranagar, Old Byyappanahalli, Bengaluru- 560033, in a traffic accident involved in your motor cycle bearing Reg.No.KA-03-JT-5366 which occurred on 16/11/2024 at 5.30 AM, Old Madras Road, Near Swami Vivekananda Metro Station, Indiranagar, Bengaluru City.

You are hereby informed to appear in this court in person or by pleader duly instructed on **18-06-2025** at 11:00 AM in the forenoon, to show cause against the application, failing wherein the said application will be heard and determined ex-parte.

Given under my hand and seal of the court on 29-04-2025

By order of the court, Sheristedar, Court of Small Causes, Mayo Hall Unit, Bangalore.

Advocate for Petitioner: **PRABHAKAR .S**
No. 18, 5th Floor, Saleh center, opposite to coffeeday, Cunningham road, Bangalore-560052.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

My clients have agreed to purchase the **Site bearing No.1429**, from **SRI.S.SRINIVAS, S/o. Late Sri. S. Swaminathan,** morefully described hereunder, who claims to be the absolute owner in possession of the same. If any person/s, Financial Institution/s and/or Statutory Authority/ies, has/have any right, title, interest and/or claim/s in or upon the same and/or any objection/s to the proposed sale, the same may be communicated to the undersigned alongwith the supporting document/s within 07 [Seven] days of this Publication. In the absence of any claim/s and/or objection/s within the stipulated period, it shall be deemed that there is/are no claim/s in respect of the same, and our clients will not be answerable to any claim/s putforth thereafter and will acquire a clear and marketable title to the same without being liable for any claim/s putforth thereafter.

**SCHEDULE PROPERTY**

**All the piece and parcel of the Property being Vacant Site bearing No.1429, BBMP Khata No.883/880/1429, New EPID No.3086963711 in New Ward No.5, Jakkur, in the layout formed by the Ministry of Communications Employees' Co-operative Housing Society Limited, situated at Sreerampura, Jakkur, Sampigehalli and Venkateshpura Villages, Yelahanka Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, named as Dr.Shivaram Karanth Nagar of Srirampura and measuring East to West 80 Ft. and North to South 50 Ft, totally measuring 4,000 Sq. Ft. or 371.61 Sq. Mtrs., now within the administrative jurisdiction of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike and bounded on the :-**

**EAST BY : Road;**
**WEST BY : Site No.1455;**
**NORTH BY : Site No.1430;**
**SOUTH BY : Site No.1428.**

SD/- **DEEPAK K. DAVE,** ADVOCATE, No.01, Palace Road, Bangalore Palace Compound, Bengaluru – 560 052, Mob. No.:98440 90500.
Bengaluru. Date: 31/05/2025

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

BE IT KNOWN TO THE PUBLIC AT LARGE that, in pursuance of instructions furnished by my client Shri.Ramesh S/o Bhaurao Kakatkar Partner of M/s.Arun Engineering Works, Udyambag Belagavi, I am addressing this notice as under:-

My client and Smt.Mangala Wd/o Arunrao Kakatkar are the only partners of M/s.Arun Engineering Works. Smt. Mangala Wd/o Arunrao Kakatkar in collusion of her sons namely, 1]Shri. Bhushan, 2]Shri.Vishal Sons of Arunrao Kakatkar created a illegal document styled as "Alleged Deed of Reconstitution of Partnership dt:2/4/2011" in respect of aforesaid partnership firm. On the basis of such illegal document, they carried illegal business in respect of the said firm. In view of the decision dt:14/3/2025 rendered in O.S.No.793/2011 by the Hon'ble I Addl.C.J Belagavi declared that Deed dt:2/4/2011 as illegal and void document and the same is stood cancelled and 1]Shri.Bhushan 2]Shri. Vishal Sons of Arunrao Kakatkar are permanently restrained not to cause obstruction to my client for carry on the business of M/s.Arun Engineering Works Udyambag Belagavi. The appellate court has also refused to grant any interim stay under order dt:2/5/2025. The aforesaid persons have no subsisting right or interest in the partnership firm M/s.Arun Engineering Works. Hence, no one should do any kind of business or transactions with regard to M/s.Arun Engineering Works with 1]Shri.Bhushan, 2]Shri.Vishal Sons of Arunrao Kakatkar. In-spite of this, if anyone indulges to do business of M/s.Arun Engineering Works with those persons, such business will be illegal and same will not be binding upon my client in any manner.

Belagavi. Date:02/06/2025

Sd/- Adv. **R.G. Jadhav**
R/o: "Som-Muktai" 4th Cross, Shastri Nagar, BELAGAVI. Cell: 9845925932

**YOUR GUIDE TO THE WORLD**

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**THE DANGEROUS THREESOME: BANGLADESH, CHINA AND PAKISTAN**

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IN CONVERSATION WITH EXPERTS

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Website:https://gttc.karnataka.gov.in

No: GTTC/PROJ/CIVIL-ELE/WORKS/BD-144/2025-26 Date:31.05.2025

**SHORT-TERM e-TENDER NOTIFICATION**

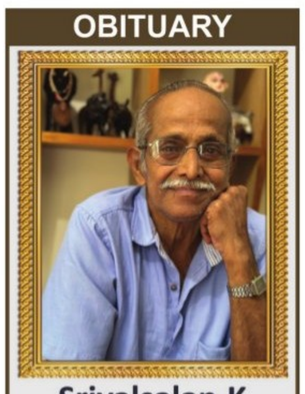
Government Tool Room and Training Centre invites tender for the following works through e-procurement.

| No. | BD No. | GTTC Centre | Work Details |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 144 | Koppal | Establishment of new GTTC Multi Skill Development Centre in AEQUS TOY Clustor SEZ Industrial Zone, Kukanur Taluk, Koppal District. |

Tender documents will be available on the e-portal **from 05.06.2025** and the last date for submission (to upload) of filled tender documents on the e-portal **is 27.062025 up to 5:30 PM.** For more details, please visit the e-procurement portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** or contact the helpline number: +9108023010900/+9108023010901 during office hours.

**Sd /-Managing Director**

**OBITUARY**



**Srivalsalan.K**
Rtd. Senior Production Manager, Modern Bread Industries, B'lore.
Death: 1st June 2025.

A beloved husband, father, grandfather and cherished friend, who passed away peacefully at the age of 75. His meditative mind and fierce willpower carried him through immense pain. Forever loved, forever strong.

**Deeply Mourned by**
Wife **Girija Mangary,**
Daughter **Sreeja Nandakumar,**
Son-in-law **Nandakumar Pezhery,**
Granddaughter **Aarya Nandakumar.**

**OBITUARY**

**COL RAM S GABRI (RETD)**
of
**"The Corps of Engineers"**
Passed away on
**29 MAY 2025**
We deeply mourn his sad demise and pray to the Almighty to bestow peace on the departed soul and grant courage to the bereaved family.

**Homage paid by :**
**Engineer-in-Chief and all Ranks of the Corps of Engineers**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I would like to inform the general public that I have lost original Sale Deed Bearing No. 4168/96-97 registered on 28/11/96 at Rajajinagar Sub Registrar Office. Police complaint also given on 30-05-2025. If any one finds it, kindly contact the below mentioned address **within 15 days** from the date of this advertisement.

Mr. S. B. Arun Kumar
# 23, G-1, Block-1,
Aishwarya Homes, 1st A Main,
15th Cross, B K Nagar,
Yeshwantpur,
Bangalore-560022.Ph:9886002252

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to inform to the General Public that my client **SMT. GAYITHRI,** Wife of Sri. Shivakumar has lost the original of Hakku Patra issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Bengaluru District pertaining to the House constructed on the property now bearing Khatha No.870/31, being portion of property Sy.No.31, situated at Kaggadasapura Village, K.R.Puram Hobli, Bengaluru East Taluk, measuring 25 x 20 Feet some months back in transit. In case the same is traced by anybody they should hand over the same to the undersigned and also in case anybody is having any claim, charge or interest over the said property, they shall lodge their objections with the undersigned within **SEVEN DAYS** from the date of Publication of this Notice.

**D.S. BHAT,** Advocate
M/S BHAT ASSOCIATES,
1st Main, 5th Cross, Yeshwanthpur,
BENGALURU - 560 022.
**Mob : 9916994581**
BENGALURU, DATE: 01.06.2025

**Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited**
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)

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The detailed advertisement, guidelines/brochure and application form are available in our website **https://www.bharatpetroleum.in/bharat-petroleum-for/business-associates/coco.aspx** and the same can also be downloaded.

Completed application forms should reach the office as indicated in the detailed advertisement latest by **02.07.2025 at 17:00 Hrs**.

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# EDITORIAL

Dignity is often a veil between us and the real truth of things

Edwin P Whipple



INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

## INDIA'S 5TH-GEN AMCA NEEDS MISSION MODE TO MEET DEADLINES

OVER a year after the Cabinet Committee on Security gave its nod for India's first 5th-generation fighter aircraft, the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA), the Defence Ministry on May 27 cleared the way for the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) under the Defence Research & Development Organisation as the nodal agency to commence work on the design and development of its execution model.

The development is welcome, although it's a case of better late than never, considering that India's not-so-friendly neighbourhood already has 5th-generation fighter aircraft among its squadrons. China reportedly has an operational fleet of 180 5th-generation fighter jets, and, according to unconfirmed reports, it unveiled its 6th-generation fighter, the Chengdu J-36, in January. Its all-weather ally Pakistan is said to be procuring 40 more of their 5th-gen fighters.

AMCA's first of the five planned prototypes is expected to be unveiled in three years, and its maiden flight is likely to take off no earlier than 2028. Its operational roll-out can be expected only by 2035. The initial prototypes may cost approximately ₹1,720 crore each, but this could be reduced to ₹860 crore when production scales up. The overall project has been allocated ₹15,000 crore. This presents a time span with possible cost escalations, during which equations about air power balance with neighbours may likely turn to India's disadvantage. This must be viewed against the backdrop of the Indian Air Force already being stretched thin, with the squadron strength down to 31 against the authorised 42.

The AMCA is an ambitious project planned to be indigenous, involving the private or public sector, either independently or in collaboration. As a 5th-generation fighter jet, it will require key features such as a stealth airframe, internal carriage of smart weapons, a low-probability-of-intercept radar, advanced sensors with data fusion, super-cruise performance, advanced avionics features, and highly integrated computer systems to enable its pilots to have a comprehensive understanding of the in-combat scenario.

With the Centre green-lighting the project, ADA is due to issue an Expression of Interest for the AMCA development phase. While the execution model is expected to lay the groundwork for how the project will unfold in stages to achieve its goals, it is essential to maintain tight deadlines so that the AMCA takes flight at the earliest.

## APTNESS OF CIVILIANS TO BEAR ARMS IS REAL ISSUE

ASSAM Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma recently announced that the State's "original inhabitants and indigenous communities" can get licences to buy firearms to protect themselves in the face of insecurity over infiltration and life threats in areas bordering Bangladesh where government presence is minimal. The Opposition has pointed out that the decision would show the security infrastructure along the international border in a poor light and even give a fillip to gun culture. In communally sensitive Assam, where Assembly elections are due early next year, the announcement has sparked a debate.

The policy raises some eyebrows. The government did not say if it had first considered strengthening border forces before announcing the policy. Protecting people's lives is a core function of the State, and the policy could be misinterpreted as ineffective governance and policing in the border areas. Secondly, vetting licence seekers to exclude the unoriginal and the non-indigenous could fuel fresh confusion in Assam amid official attempts to weed out illegal Bangladeshi immigrants. Thirdly, the stringent police verification process for granting licences to "genuine" citizens could raise allegations of discrimination. Fourthly, many people in these areas still struggle to access basic amenities, and it's unrealistic to expect them to afford an expensive firearm, undergo training, and acquire the cognitive skills necessary to understand the rules of self-defence. The well-off among them would easily bear arms, even creating an "armed elite" within society.

It's not the first time a state in India is arming its citizens. The government trained civilians as Village Defence Guards in J&K. The scheme was disbanded after a scandal involving licence and firearm misuse. Punjab once trained civilians as Special Police Officers. Chhattisgarh gave firearms to tribal youth, forming a vigilante group, Salwa Judum, in 2006 to combat the Naxal insurgency. The Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional after mass recovery of illegal firearms and human rights violations. The Court's verdict observed: "The creation of such a miasmic environment of dehumanisation of youngsters of the deprived segments of our population, in which guns are given to them rather than books, to stand as guards for the rapine, plunder and loot in our forests, would be to lay the road to national destruction." The spirit behind the apex court's pronouncement is applicable in Assam's case as well.

**QUICK TAKE**

### UNIQUE LIFE-SAVER

JAPANESE researchers are on the verge of a breakthrough: artificial blood for use by patients of any blood type. Clinical trials are currently on. Made from expired donor blood, the lab substitute reportedly clones real blood duties—carrying oxygen and aiding blood clots. Unlike the original, it lasts over a year at room temperature. The innovation can revolutionise emergency healthcare worldwide because artificial blood can be available anywhere, from hospitals to crash sites to conflict zones, ready for instant use without the need for compatibility tests or refrigeration. Indian researchers are not far behind in experimenting with artificial red blood cells, artificial blood vessels and even lab-made haemoglobin.

IN early May, Sri Lankans voted for a third time in a series—this time to elect members to the local authorities. The ruling National People's Power (NPP) secured a majority of seats in 266 out of 341 local bodies in an election considered a popularity test for the incumbency. The NPP secured 43.26 percent of the vote, recording a dent in popularity, also reflective of the fragmented nature of votes at the local level.

Into its seventh month in office, the NPP appears tight-lipped on matters of policy and plans, preferring to avoid discussion and instead offering combative television performances by junior ranks on public concerns that beg answers. The May 6 vote can be best considered a quiet reprimand from the people, impatient with the slow delivery. While the government has a five-year term, it still needs to manage public expectations and prevent public outrage.

The brewing dissent is partly of the government's making. The NPP, while indulging in rhetorical condemnation of corruption as the only reason for economic collapse, did not adequately explain to the public the severity of Sri Lanka's economic situation. The NPP sometimes made it appear a management problem, which only the NPP could address. People still trust the government to have integrity but question its ability to fix the economy without passing further burden on to them.

The government is now saddled with the Herculean task of managing an economy that successive governments have mismanaged. It has also inherited a much-maligned reform agenda via the International Monetary Fund (IMF), from which there is no easy departure. The administration is naturally finding it challenging to explain that things are not as easy as they appeared to be when it was in opposition. Barring the occasional protest, it is unlikely that public outrage can be prevented from spilling onto the streets in some form soon if the administration does not take action to move the economy forward without compromising public trust.

Sri Lanka is currently attempting to negotiate the hefty 44 percent reciprocal tariff announced by US President Donald Trump. The surprise ruling by an American trade court blocking steep tariffs may offer the island some respite, but it calls for prudent handling. The island's bulk exports head to the US, and the proposed tariff poses a serious threat to the country's export earnings. How Sri Lanka negotiates and plans to use the small window of opportunity will depend on solid foreign policy and trade negotiating capacity.

This questions the current dispensation's foreign policy, which is often unclear and, at times, raises doubts about strategy. Take, for example, how India's neighbours have moved away despite its "Neighbourhood First" policy. Some have looked to the West, while others towards China. Colombo could use the opportunity to consolidate its trade partnerships with India in a manner that bolsters the economy and maximises its geostrategic benefits. During the economic crisis, India played a crucial role, although it was often viewed with misgivings due to its chequered past. As economists note, it may be a window of opportunity to collaborate with India to gain a better foothold in negotiating with the US, given the close economic ties between the two countries. In doing so, Colombo should overlook long-term loyalties that have remained steadfast in their friendship or ignore China, Sri Lanka's largest bilateral creditor.

This calls for a foreign policy that is rooted in economic, trade and geostrategic interests. In short, Colombo should work with all these powers to deliver the best results at home. Sri Lanka needs a well-crafted balancing act. The Dissanayake administration should learn from the Rajapaksa regime that playing one against the other does not yield long-term beneficial results. The singularly pro-China approach led the island into deeper debt, which eventually brought the economy to a grinding halt and created powerful enemies.

In short, the government must learn to balance the Neighbourhood First with Belt and Road. It also needs to strategically involve partners to resolve the US reciprocal tariff matter, which could otherwise deliver a deadly blow to an economy that has lost its shock absorbers. Now, it is a matter of carefully managing competing geopolitical interests to secure economic advancement. In this regard, there are lessons to learn from countries that maximised their geostrategic locations and others who repositioned themselves to meet new economic challenges.

It is this lack of policy coherence that prevents the country from moving forward and making strategic partnerships that can help Sri Lanka overcome its economic woes. Beyond bold action, it is now that the island requires innovative policy approaches that do not make choices that harm.

The NPP has been prudent in not abandoning the IMF formula despite firm election pledges to the contrary. This is essential for economic recovery and for maintaining a semblance of normalcy. It is equally important to prioritise strategy over old affiliations or political ideology, as challenging as it may be.

The reform agenda is quite unpopular among many, but it now appears to be the only available antidote to the island's problems. Having opposed it before the polls, the government now finds it difficult to convince the people of additional tax revisions and other controls that pass the burden to them.

In addition, the government should avoid walking back on previous plans to restructure loss-making and underperforming state-run enterprises. As challenging as it may be, the government must reduce the massive public sector workforce, which exceeds 1.3 million, a political dumping ground where successive governments created jobs for political gain. What the country has also not seen is a move toward increasing productivity.

All the strategies in the world and partnerships cannot deliver Sri Lanka's economy unless strategic attempts are made to improve productivity. Despite the stated policies, there remains significant confusion about how the administration intends to fix the island's flagging economy. This, too, becomes a matter of policy intricately linked to foreign policy.

Meanwhile, time is running out, slowly but surely, for an administration brought to office with great expectations. Along with that, public patience too, is on the wane. For President Anura Dissanayake and his brigade, it is a wake-up call to review policies and adopt a pragmatic, geostrategically prudent foreign policy and economic approach if Sri Lanka is to move forward. *(Views are personal)*

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Lack of policy coherence prevents Sri Lanka from moving forward and making strategic partnerships that can help the country overcome its economic woes

## PATCH ECONOMY, MEND BILATERALS, SOOTHE CITIZENS

DILRUKSHI HANDUNNETTI

Award-winning journalist and lawyer. She is a founder and director of the Colombo-based Center for Investigative Reporting (CIR)

MANDAR PARDIKAR

## A SYNCRETIC VISION TO HEAL OUR DIVIDED WORLD

RENUKA NARAYANAN

FAITHLINE

THIS week, I felt the urge to revisit a Sufi bridge-builder between Hinduism and Islam just to see if I still felt hopeful about his syncretic ideas. Bulle Shah (1680–1735) was born into a noble family of Syeds at Qasur, now in Pakistan. As a child, Bulle Shah, colloquially known as 'Bulla' and 'Bulleya' in Punjabi, was reportedly lost in thought frequently, which worried his family.

In the course of his restless youth, Bulla was tormented by inchoate spiritual longings while urged by his concerned family to live his life as a nobleman with all its attendant pleasures and privileges. One day, he went on a long ride to clear his head and get away from home for a bit. He happened to notice a line of ants diligently carrying grain to their anthill. He paused, his attention caught, and wondered, "All that industry just to feed oneself?" Why was every living creature, from insects to birds, animals and human beings, relentlessly driven by the same mission—to find food, to sustain life, to perpetuate its species? The mystery of Creation beckoned strongly to him, and he set out to find a spiritual guide.

Bulla found his spiritual master by chance in a vegetable garden of all places. His name was Inayat Qadiri, from the Qadiri order of Sufis. It was a historically influential order, for it was a Qadiri Sufi who had taught Prince Dara Shikoh and led him to explore attempts to syncretise Hinduism and Islam—as in the work *Majma ul-Bahrain*, meaning The Mingling of Oceans. However, that well-meant book had not reached the ordinary people; it had stayed in high-class circles, where it had little or no influence. It was not for the hoi polloi, just as albums of miniature paintings were not for ordinary folk those days, but were expensive collectables for kings, nobles and wealthy merchants.

Bulla's noble family was outraged that he should so adore a lowly market gardener, but he was not to be dissuaded. His youth and early adulthood coincided with the last harsh years of Aurangzeb's reign. This unpleasant legacy may have further influenced his preference to follow Dara's syncretic path rather than Aurangzeb's divisive and intolerant route. Dara was the 'might-have-been', the lost prince who would forever symbolise an attempt at Hindu-Muslim amity. Somebody would have to articulate the Qadiri vision to the common folk, and Bulla took it upon himself to do so.

Bulle Shah wrote highly romantic poetry in Punjabi, allegorising God on the pattern of Krishna Bhakti. He drew on the popular Punjabi imagery of the folkloric heroine, Heer, pining for her lover, Ranjha, which also resonated with Advaita philosophy—specifically, the concept of the *jivatma*, or individual soul, seeking to merge into the *Paramatma*, the Universal Soul.

Bulla's poems soon caught on in Punjabi circles, like the heartfelt "*Masjid dhaade, mandir dhaade/ Dhaade jo kuch dhainda/ Ik kisi da dil na dhaanvin/ Rab dilaanvichrehnda.*" This translates as, "Break the mosque and break the temple, break what can be broken; but do not break the human heart, within which God abides."

PIXABAY

**Bulleh Shah challenged religious orthodoxy through romantic poetry, using everyday imagery to celebrate love, unity, and spiritual freedom. He became a bridge between divided communities and a lasting voice for interfaith harmony. Today, we must consider his ideas for the sake of national interest**

This did not go down well with conservative clerics, and Bulla faced considerable resistance, but he was determined to express his thoughts and have his say. Typically, he answered in verse, with "*Mullah, maar naboliyaan/Sannuapnayaar rijhaavan de/Kanjri baniyaan meri ijjat na ghat di/Mujhenachkeyaarmanaavan de.*" This means, "Mullah, call me not to prayer/Let me please my Beloved/Though I become a dancing girl, I lose no honour/Let me win him over with my dance." According to Bulla, the objective of social unity was a worthwhile goal, and its secret lay in realising that 'God is One'. This short, illuminating verse struck a chord with several people: "*Jit jitu-margawaai/Hun tuhaarfakira/Jitte da muladhkasira/Haare da mulhira.*"

The literal, if bumpy, translation of that is, "Life has slipped by chasing victory/Now learn to lose, o seeker/Victory's worth but half a grain/While 'defeat' is a diamond." Its message to everyday folk was to let their inner moral and spiritual convictions triumph and not surrender to the forceful rules of orthodoxy.

Bulla got more noticed in the second half of the 20th century, thanks to Bollywood. His first airing outside Punjab was in the film Bobby in 1973. His verse, '*Masjid dhaade, mandir dhaade*', was translated in Hindi as the song *Beshaq mandir-masjid todo*. His lyrics scored another hit through AR Rahman's *Tere ishq nachaya chhaiyy-achhaiyya* (Your love set me dancing) in the movie *Dil Se* back in 1998. Bulla's verses were even transposed to the classical realms of Kathak, wherein 'Sufi Kathak' was quite the vogue in Delhi in the noughties. But it is as a political message his words carry significance today for communal relations. They seem to urge a deeper sense of nationhood through uniting the God-seeking impulses of differing religions.

Another verse that highlights his syncretic mission is addressed straight to 'God' as Bulla wished to see him: "*Bindrabanmeingaucharave, Lanka chadkarnaadbajave/ Makke da bann Haji aave/Wah-wah rang vataida/Hun kitti aap chhupaida?*" Meaning, "You appeared as Krishna, Rama, and the Pilgrim of Mecca, showing so many colours; Where do You hide now?"

Are Bulla's ideas remotely doable today? It's likely that many will not buy his fuzzy love. Deep differences exist in both theory and practice despite sporadic inter-faith initiatives. But maybe, just maybe, we can 'fake it till we make it' for the sake of national interest. *(Views are personal)*

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**MAILBAG**

**WRITE TO:** letters@newindianexpress.com

### Flood crisis

Ref: *Cities drowning in greed's flood* (June 1). Cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru face repeated flooding due to outdated drainage and over-concretisation. Current systems can't handle rainfall. The government should adopt global best practices and avoid reclaiming wetlands.
**Haribandhu Panigrahi Tarbha**

### Balance needed

Ref: Needed soon: Switch to life-work balance (June 1). The author suggests valuing the skills of retired people by shifting from a work-life to a life-work balance. Reducing long hours for the youth and involving retired people can help build a more inclusive, creative, healthy, and fulfilling society.
**Jayaraman C P, Chalakudi**

### AI limitations

Ref: *AI bloodbath in white collar jobs, and slower hiring* (June 1). When the computer was first introduced, there was an outcry that it would lead to large-scale unemployment. Yet nothing drastic occurred, and work was completed more quickly and efficiently. The human brain is unique and can never be perfectly replicated by AI.
**R Sampath, Chennai**

### Sindoor losses

Ref: Suffered initial losses during Op Sindoor: CDS (June 1). CDS General Anil Chauhan's admission of initial losses in Operation Sindoor clarifies that Indian jets were hit. Though India struck back effectively, the belief that it emerged unscathed is now proven incorrect, despite heavier casualties on the Pakistani side.
**C V Aravind, Bengaluru**

### Covid surge

Ref: Covid cases cross 3K, 26 deaths (June 1). A new Covid-19 wave in India has caused 3,000 cases, mostly in Maharashtra, Delhi and Kerala. Experts are not worried yet, but if it worsens as in 2020, people must be ready to protect themselves.
**Gulam Rabbani, Haveli**

### Highway failure

Ref: *Concessionaire failed to improve ground's bearing capacity: NHAI* (June 1). Serious damage to National Highway 66 at Kooriyad, Kerala, due to design faults and unsuitable elevated embankment has drawn national attention. NHAI's handling is unacceptable, blaming the concessionaire unfairly. Contract awards and bid documents must be urgently reviewed.
**Jiji Panicker K, Chengannur**

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**POSTS OF THE DAY**

**Jairam Ramesh** @Jairam_Ramesh
Rahul Gandhi had likened the caste census to an X-Ray of society - which had been ridiculed by the PM. Now Dhankar ji calls it a MRI. What will the PM say now?

**Piyush Goyal** @PiyushGoyal
The Modi govt has consistently worked to enhance Ease of Doing Business in the country... global companies are increasingly choosing India as trusted partner in growth

**Mayawati** @Mayawati
Dominance of feudal & criminal elements, acts of casteist & communal hatred, injustice, oppression and displacement of poor, exposes the failure of rule of law

● Kharge says nation backs forces, calls for unity on national security ● 'Will answer colleagues, critics after return'

# After CDS' Op Sindoor revelations, Cong raises pitch for spl session

**PREETHA NAIR** @ New Delhi

A day after the Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan's revelations on India's loss during the India-Pak conflict, the Congress on Sunday reiterated its demand for an immediate special session of Parliament. They noted that even Pakistan has convened its Parliament to discuss the developments.

The Congress also demanded that the government take all parties and the nation into confidence and discuss India's defence preparedness and foreign policy strategy after Operation Sindoor.

Citing the example of restraint shown in Pakistan's Parliament during recent tensions between India and Pakistan, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said that the entire nation supports the armed forces and called for unity on issues concerning national security. "When the clashes broke out between India and Pakistan, a discussion started in Pakistan's Parliament not to speak anything against the country. So long as there is an army, we all are safe. That's why we support the armed forces," he said.

Responding to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public speeches after Operation Sindoor, Kharge urged him to "focus on the enemy instead of self-boasting" and to refrain from electioneering.

Sharpening his attack on the government following CDS's admission, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said the PM or the Defence Minister should have informed the opposition leaders in the all-party meeting about what Gen Chauhan had stated in Singapore.

"The Chief of Defence Staff has made some important statements on Operation Sindoor in, of all places, Singapore. It would have been better if the PM or the Defence Minister had briefed opposition leaders first in an all-party meeting."

> **When the clashes broke out between India and Pakistan, a discussion started in Pakistan's Parliament not to speak anything against the country. So long as there is an army, we all are safe. That's why we support the armed forces**
>
> Mallikarjun Kharge, LoP in Rajya Sabha

## Tharoor: Conveying message on terror now

**PREETHA NAIR** @ New Delhi

AS spat between Congress leader Shashi Tharoor and his party colleagues continues to make headlines, the Thiruvananthapuram MP on Sunday fired a fresh salvo saying that he cannot afford to dwell on the criticism in India, including from his party.

Speaking to the media in Brazil, where he is leading one of India's multi-party delegations, Tharoor said that he will speak with his colleagues and critics after he returns to India and is currently focusing on conveying India's message on terrorism to other countries.

"I think this is a time for us to focus on our mission. Undoubtedly, in a thriving democracy, there are bound to be comments and criticisms. When we get back to India, we'll have our chance to speak to our colleagues and critics."

Tharoor's comments in Panama last week that "India conducted its first surgical strike in 2016", has earned the ire of his party colleagues.

"What has changed in recent years is that the terrorists have also realised they will have a price to pay. On that, let there be no doubt. This time, we crossed not only the Line of Control but also the international border, and we struck the terrorist headquarters in Balakot" he had said.

## Owaisi equates Pak terror outfits with Al-Qaeda

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** @ New Delhi

AIMIM chief and Lok Sabha MP Asaduddin Owaisi, who is part of an all-party delegation to Algeria, lashed out at Pakistan, calling them an 'epicentre of Takfirism', which refers to radical ideologies.

Owaisi said that there is no ideological difference between the terrorist groups in Pakistan, global terrorist outfits like ISIS and Al-Qaeda.

"Pakistan is the epicentre of Takfirism and there is no difference in ideology between the terrorist groups in Pakistan and Daesh and Al-Qaeda. They believe that they have a religious sanction, which is completely wrong. Islam does not allow the killing of any person, and unfortunately, that is their ideology", he said.

Owaisi reiterated his demand to put Pakistan back on the grey list of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). "Terrorism survives on two things - ideology and money. Ideology, you know very well, you have seen the Black Decade, even in South Algeria, you still have some problems. On that point, we are together... Once you bring Pakistan back in the FATF Grey list, we will see a decrease in terrorism in India," he added.

## CBI arrests IRS officer for accepting ₹25L bribe on tax relief promise

**MUKESH RANJAN** @ New Delhi

THE Central Bureau of Investigation has arrested a 2007-batch Indian Revenue Service Officer Amit Kumar Singal, who was presently posted as the Additional Director General in the Directorate of Taxpayer Services, New Delhi. Along with him, another individual identified as Harsh Kotak, was charged with demanding and accepting ₹25 lakh as a bribe. This ₹25 lakh, according to the CBI, was a part of the payment of the total ₹45 lakh in bribe demanded from the complainant.

A case was registered against the accused earlier on Saturday. It was alleged in the FIR that the accused, as a public servant, had demanded illegal gratification of ₹45 lakh from the complainant. This was in exchange for providing favourable treatment from the Revenue/Income Tax Department. Further, according to the CBI, the demand was accompanied by threats of legal action, heavy penalties and harassment in case the complainant refused to comply.

The CBI laid a trap and caught Harsh Kotak, associate of Singal, while accepting a bribe from the complainant on behalf of the IRS officer at Singal's Mohali residence. Later that day, Singal was also arrested at his residence in Vasant Kunj, the CBI said.

According to the officials, the IRS officer had assured the complainant a relief in tax matters in exchange for the bribe and had warned of "legal action, heavy penalties, and harassment" if the demand was not met. Both Singhal and Kotak were arrested and will be produced before the competent court, the CBI said.

The arrest was followed by a thorough search by CBI at multiple locations in Delhi, Punjab, and Mumbai, as part of the probe into the case. Officials also confirmed that the documents and digital evidence related to the bribery case were being seized and examined. Investigations by CBI into the matter are still underway, the officials said.

# Intel sniffs China's anti-India app in NE, Centre mulls ban

**MUKESH RANJAN** @ New Delhi

GIVING a new dimension to information warfare, intelligence agencies have found that China is resorting to plot against India's northeast by using a mobile app - REDNOTE - which lures users with money and other benefits to share and spread anti-national contents, sources said on Sunday.

They said that following a report from the intelligence agencies, the government is considering a ban on the online application, as the residents of multiple north-eastern states, including those from Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Assam are seen to be targeted.

The intelligence sources said the REDNOTE appeared to be an ordinary app, but a closer analysis revealed that the same was filled with fake RAW documents, disputed maps of India, doctored videos and a few pro-Pakistan contents.

They said that the agencies have also found that REDNOTE has deliberately entered the mobile application market with the aim of creating mistrust among youth towards India, posting messages like "Delhi is far away". It posts messages with remarks like "China is closer", which is beneficial for people living in the northeast.

> **Given the geopolitical importance of India's northeast in terms of the country's security, China is applying the same strategy it used earlier in Africa, Taiwan and Hong Kong to create instability**
>
> A senior security officer

The intelligence sources suspect that psychological operations experts from China and Pakistan have put out the app to influence the people of the northeastern states.

A senior security officer said, "Given the geopolitical importance of India's northeast in terms of the country's security, China is applying the same strategy it used earlier in Africa, Taiwan and Hong Kong to create instability."

Now that the ill intent of China has come to light, the government has initiated the necessary procedure to ban it, as India had done earlier against popular Chinese apps like TikTok, SHAREit, and UC Browser, on the pretext of national security, the sources said.

It is to be noted here that for the past several years China has been questioning India's sovereignty over Arunachal Pradesh and depicted the state as part of "South Tibet" under its control on its maps, which has a ways drawn sharp reactions from New Delhi.

India has long been accusing the country's northern neighbour of deploying seemingly harmless mobile apps to gather intelligence, influence youth and launch propaganda war against it. It has also been noticed that Beijing repeatedly indulged in spreading disinformation to exploit ethnic differences and regional tensions in states like Manipur, Assam and Nagaland by using provocative messages to instill separatist sentiments among the people of northeastern states.

Even the Chinese state media, Global Times, runs aggressive editorials targeting Indian policies, mocking democratic governance and promoting narratives focusing on Chinese superiority over India.

## INSIDER TRACK

### BJP for 'political SHOs' in Delhi

Days before Delhi's Rekha Gupta government hit the 100-day milestone, the Delhi BJP decided to unveil a new avatar for its freshly elected block and district-level leaders: the political 'SHO'. In a move that blends local governance with dramatic roleplay, these grassroots leaders received a solemn message from senior functionaries that they must act like 'SHOs'. The abbreviation stands for Station House Officer—a police officer in charge of a police station. The message was clear: don't be mere office-bearers; take up responsibility and serve the people in your respective blocks and wards.

### ED's problem: Officials in graft cases

Since the CBI has arrested Enforcement Directorate's Deputy Director Chintan Raghuvanshi, a 2013-batch IRS officer, on graft charges, bureaucratic circles are agog about the impending malice in the law enforcement agency, which administers the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). Raghuvanshi is not the only ED officer accused of alleged bribery. Several similar cases in various states have come to light in recent times. A retired IPS officer of the 1988 batch, who served a stint in the ED, said that the enhanced powers to the agency under the PMLA are not a new phenomenon. So, it is not the case of "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely".

He said that until almost 2018, the staffing of the ED was primarily dominated by police officers, who had always had exposure to administering the criminal provisions under the law. When the criminal clauses were inserted in the PMLA, it was not new to them, and they handled it with care. However, as officers from revenue and other financial services began joining the agency, many of whom had very little training in dealing with the criminal provisions of the laws, such graft cases came to light more frequently. Officers joining the ED, irrespective of their service cadre, should be given training on how to deal with and invoke the criminal provisions of the PMLA, he said.

### NDA targets specific Assembly seats

Bihar gears up for its Assembly elections, the ruling NDA is expected to adopt a carefully designed electoral strategy aimed at securing the maximum number of seats, particularly in constituencies dominated by Muslims, Dalits, and OBCs. According to sources, the JD(U) is likely to field its candidates in most Muslim-majority constituencies, as well as in Kurmi and Mahadalit-dominated constituencies. Despite its recent support for the Waqf Bill, the JD(U) is not seen as having a trust deficit with the Muslim community. That may be the deciding factor in majority of the Muslim-dominated seats going to the JD(U). Meanwhile, other NDA allies, such as the LJP(Ram Vilas) and Hindustani Awam Morcha, as well as smaller partners, are expected to contest constituencies with large populations of Dalits and Extremely Backward Classes. The BJP is likely to focus on constituencies where Upper Castes and OBCs are predominant. In Bihar, OBC-dominated constituencies make up the largest segment, followed by seats where Scheduled Castes, Muslims, and Upper Castes are significant voting blocs. There is an ongoing discussion within NDA circles that the JD(U) and BJP, the two principal parties in the alliance, may contest on equal number of seats. Final seat-sharing arrangements would be worked out closer to the polls. Allocations for smaller allies will likely depend on past electoral performance.

### Brother's estranged wife vs brother

Speculation is rife in Bihar that the ruling NDA, led by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, may field Aishwarya Rai, the estranged wife of Tej Pratap Yadav, the elder son of RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav, against younger son and former Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav. The grapevine has it that Aishwarya Rai could be a potential JD(U) or BJP candidate from the Raghopur assembly seat in Vaishali district. Tejashwi Yadav holds the seat, which Yadav voters traditionally dominate. An MBA from Amity University, Noida, Aishwarya Rai is the daughter of former Bihar minister Chandrika Rai and the granddaughter of late Daroga Prasad Rai, a former Chief Minister. She completed her schooling at Patna's Notre Dame and pursued her higher education at Delhi University. Fluent in English, Rai is considered to have inherited a strong political legacy from her family. In 2018, Aishwarya married Tej Pratap Yadav. However, the marriage deteriorated within months, and a divorce case, still sub judice, was filed five months later.

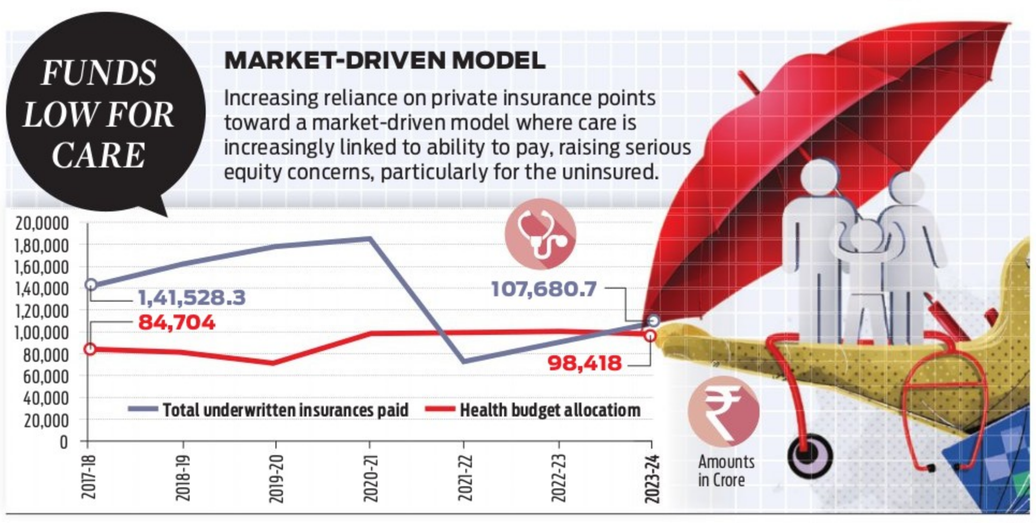
# Insurance premiums surpass health budget

**VISMAY BASU** @ New Delhi

IN a stark indicator of India's shifting healthcare landscape, individual health insurance premiums have now exceeded the combined central government allocation for the Department of Health and Family Welfare and the Department of Health Research.

An analysis of annual reports from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India and corresponding Union Budget documents shows that while insurance premium collections briefly dipped in the immediate post-pandemic years (2021–22 and 2022–23), they have since surged past the national health budget. Even when related spending by other ministries—such as Defence and Labour—is taken into account, India's total public health expenditure remains low: just around 2% of the Union Budget and 1.5% of GDP, falling short of the 2.5% target set by the National Health Policy.

This trend signals more than a budgetary shift—it reflects a structural transformation in how healthcare is accessed and funded in India. Increasing reliance on private insurance points toward a market-driven model where care is increasingly linked to ability to pay, raising serious equity concerns, particularly for the uninsured and underinsured.




Critics argue that insurance-based healthcare, especially when not backed by strong public infrastructure, can exacerbate inequalities. A large share of India's workforce remains in the informal sector and lacks access to comprehensive insurance. Public health facilities, meanwhile, continue to be underfunded and overstretched.

Moreover, private insurance schemes often come with coverage exclusions, co-payments, and claim caps, limiting their effectiveness in protecting individuals from high medical costs. Many policies do not cover outpatient care—the most commonly used form of healthcare—and focus disproportionately on hospital-based curative services. This not only limits the scope of care but also diverts resources away from preventive and community health initiatives, which are crucial for long-term wellbeing.

Health economists warn that this could weaken public support and political commitment to strengthening universal health services. Over-reliance on insurance risks creating a two-tiered system: one for those who can afford private plans, and another, often neglected, for those who cannot.

While insurance can supplement healthcare access, experts caution that it cannot substitute a well-funded public health system. Fragmented care, exclusion of the most vulnerable, and a drift away from viewing health as a public good care.

# Flying high: Aviation industry creates 7.7 mn jobs, contributes 1.5% of GDP

**S. LALITHA** @ New Delhi

THE Indian Aviation industry, which has emerged as the world's third largest global aviation market, today contributes 53.6 billion US dollars annually which accounts for 1.5% of the country's Gross Domestic Product. It is also responsible for creating 7.7 million jobs across the country both directly and indirectly.

Making a presentation on Sunday on the impact of the industry on the critical role of aviation on the country's economic landscape during the opening day of the annual general meeting of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), Amitabh Khosla, its country Director for India, Nepal and Bhutan said aviation is a significant catalyst for employment, economic activity, international trade and investment and global connectivity.

There is a direct correlation between levels of air connectivity of a country and its levels of competitiveness, its productivity, its levels of investment, tourism and trade flow. In 2023, the industry annually generated a USD 53.6 billion contribution to India's economy, underpinning 7.7 million jobs in the country," Khosla said.

Additionally, tourism supported by aviation adds ₹27.1 billion to the GDP and employs 5 million people, he pointed out. International tourists contribute USD 29.4 billion annually to the economy through purchase of goods and services locally. "Overall the travel and tourism sector accounts for 6.5% of the nation's GDP and 8.9% of total employment in 2023," he specified.

India has recovered remarkably from the Covid, Khosla said. While the domestic market recovered more quickly, the international market has moved ahead now.

As of December 2024, the international sector is almost 20% above its 2019 level while domestic is more than 8%. "Such a positive recovery reaffirms the strong demand for international travel and provides a firm foundation for the period ahead," he said.

Middle East is the largest international passenger market for flyers from India with 13.7 mn departing in 2023, followed by Asia Pacific and Europe, he specified.

Airlines have responded to the growth by significantly increasing the frequency of flights and seat capacity, the Country Director said. "The number of scheduled flights rose by a significant 77.7 & reaching approximately 1.3 million in 2024. The majority of these flights cater to the domestic market which expanded from 6.13,000 flights in 2014 to almost 1.1 million in 2024," he said. The growth was primarily driven by Indigo, which accounted for 53% of departing flights from and within India in 2024.

**VALLEY OF FLOWERS**

The Valley of Flowers in Uttarakhand, a UNESCO World Heritage site, officially opened its gates to tourists on Sunday, marking the beginning of its annual season. The first group of visitors departed at seven in the morning.

2 KILLED IN HEAD-ON COLLISION IN UP'S CHITRAKOOT

| INDIA | Max | Min | | Max | Min |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ahmedabad | 34 | 27 | Mumbai | 31 | 27 |
| Bhopal | 33 | 24 | Panaji | 31 | 27 |
| Jaipur | 34 | 26 | Patna | 36 | 29 |
| Amritsar | 36 | 24 | Lucknow | 36 | 28 |
| Chennai | 36 | 28 | Port Blair | 29 | 27 |
| Kolkata | 36 | 28 | Imphal | 26 | 21 |
| Srinagar | 17 | 11 | Chandigarh | 36 | 24 |

# Rains continue to pound NE; toll in flash floods, landslides jumps to 34

## Over 58K affected in Assam; 1,500 tourists stranded in Sikkim & 1,300 families hit in Tripura

**PRASANTA MAZUMDAR** @ Guwahati

Locals row their makeshift raft at a flood-affected area while moving to a safer place, in Lakhimpur district, Assam | PTI

MONSOON rains continued to trigger widespread landslides and flash floods in Northeast, taking death toll to 34 on Sunday, officials said.

The first wave of the floods in Assam, triggered by incessant rains, affected over 3.64 lakh people across 19 districts and disrupted road transport and train services. Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Tripura and Sikkim have been also affected by the rains.

Four persons -- two in Assam and one each in Mizoram and Tripura – died on Sunday which took the Northeast toll to 34. Ten people died in Assam, nine in Arunachal, six each in Meghalaya and Mizoram, two in Tripura and one in Nagaland. Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday spoke with Assam, Arunachal, Sikkim chief ministers and Manipur Governor to take stock of the situation. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said Shah offered all possible assistance to deal with the situation. "I have briefed him on the measures being taken and we are grateful for his concern and support," Sarma said. He cautioned people that heavy rainfall in Arunachal— Kibithoo (17 cm), Hayuliang (15 cm), Kalaktang (10 cm) — might lead to a sharp rise in the river water levels downstream. "Assam is already witnessing intense rain in Silchar (42 cm), Karimganj (35 cm) and Hailakandi (30 cm). People living in low-lying and riverbank areas are advised to stay alert and follow local advisories," he said.

The Northeast Frontier Railway cancelled several trains as rainwater submerged tracks in the Karimganj section of Barak Valley.

In Sikkim, nearly 1,500 tourists were stranded as roads were blocked following landslides. The rains disrupted the search for nine missing tourists from Odisha and West Bengal. Their vehicle had fallen into river Teesta, 1,000 ft below, recently. There were altogether 11 occupants in the vehicle and two were rescued.

The Indian Air Force (IAF) rescued 14 people who were stranded in the middle of flooded Bomjir river in Lower Dibang Valley of Arunachal. The IAF pressed into service an Mi 17 helicopter following requests from Arunachal and Assam governments. The floods in Manipur affected over 3,800 people and damaged at least 883 houses. Imphal East district suffered maximum damage. Some major rivers breached embankments, flooding vast swathes of the state capital Imphal and surrounding localities.

The floods in Tripura affected over 1,300 families. Chief Minister Manik Saha said the flood-affected people in the West Tripura district were being moved to safer areas. He said the administration was helping the marooned everywhere. Mizoram reported landslides and landslips from 211 locations which disrupted road travel. Sixty houses collapsed. Damages were also reported from parts of Meghalaya.

# Chirag may quit ministry to test Bihar Assembly poll waters from general seat

**RAMASHANKAR** @ Patna

AHEAD of the Bihar assembly elections, there is growing speculation that Chirag Pawan, the Union Minister for Food Processing Industries and leader of the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), may resign from the Narendra Modi cabinet soon to contest the state polls due later this year.

Bihar in-charge of LJP (RV) and Jamui MP Arun Bharti said on Sunday that a formal proposal would be sent to party president Chirag Paswan, requesting him to contest the assembly elections from a general seat instead of a reserved seat. He is likely to announce his return to state politics at a public rally in Ara, Bhojpur district, on June 8.

"Since Chirag is not the leader of a particular community, the party want him to contest a general seat instead of a reserved seat to send out the message that he is ready for a bigger role in the state politics," Bharti added.

With social justice emerging as a major poll plank this time, Chirag's entry into state politics is said to benefit the ruling NDA. LJP(RV) has set to organise 'Nav Sankalp Mahasabha' at Ara in Bhojpur on June 8, in which Chirag may announce his return to state politics.

A senior leader of LJP (RV), speaking on condition of anonymity, said Chirag has decided to focus on state politics and bid farewell to national politics.

Bharti told this newspaper that a resolution to make a formal request to party chief Chirag Paswan to contest the assembly polls was passed at the recent executive committee meeting. "Wait for next Sunday (June 8) when Chirag will make a formal announcement about his plans," he said.

Sources said that senior party leaders held a meeting at Bikramganj in Rohtas district on June 30 (the day the PM addressed a rally) to chalk out future strategy for the upcoming assembly elections. The meeting also discussed about party's claim on the number of seats it wanted to contest in the election.

A source said that LJP(RV) will submit a proposal to top NDA leaders to provide seats to the party.

### Tej opens up on ouster

RJD chief Lalu Prasad's elder son Tej Pratap Yadav broke his silence after a week since his expulsion from the RJD over a controversial FB post, saying, "There are traitors outside and within the party." It's said to be a dig at the new leadership of the party.

## SRINAGAR DIARY

**FAYAZ WANI**
Our correspondent
in Jammu and Kashmir
fayazwani123@gmail.com

### A homecoming for 3 PDP turncoats in J&K

Three leaders who had deserted the PDP — ex-MLAs Aijaz Ahmad Mir and Noor Mohammad as well as Raja Waheed — returned to the party like the prodigal son on Saturday. And they were duly welcomed back by none other than party president and former CM Mehbooba Mufti. While Noor had quit the PDP after the abrogation of Article 370 and crossed over to Altaf Bukhari's J&K Apni Party, Aijaz had left before the Assembly polls last year, as he was denied a mandate from the Shopian Assembly seat. Many PDP turncoats had also returned to the party fold before the Assembly elections. Most of them, however, failed to win over voters.

### Shut down unauthorised websites: Govt to depts

In view of growing cyber attacks, the J&K government has asked its departments to shut down all their privately hosted and unauthorised departmental websites. An order issued in this regard by the Commissioner Secretary to Government highlighted the risks associated with unauthorised digital platforms, outdated hardware or software infrastructure and a rise in incidents of phishing. The directive stated that no future departmental websites be developed or hosted on non-government domains. It further stressed that, no official communication shall be made or responded to if transmitted from non-government email accounts.

### PHE employee sacked for involvement in drug case

The Jal Shakti (PHE) Department of the Jammu & Kashmir government has dismissed an employee for his alleged involvement in a narcotics case. According to an order, the employee — identified as Shabir Hussain, a Khalasi posted in the PHE Division (Poonch) — was arrested after four to six grams of a heroine-like substance were recovered from his possession last year. Hussain was placed under suspension following his arrest in line with Rule 31 (2) of the J&K Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956. He remained in judicial custody from Sept 14 to Oct 28. He has also been disqualified from seeking government employment in future.

# Mukhtar's son disqualified from Assembly

**NAMITA BAJPAI** @ Lucknow

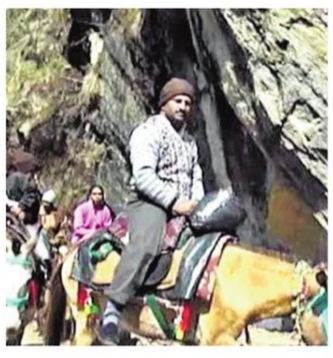
UP MLA Abbas Ansari, son of late gangster-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari, has been disqualified as a member of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly after he was sentenced to two years in prison in a 2022 hate speech case by a local court in Mau district, official sources said on Sunday.

Under the Representation of the People Act, there is a provision to terminate the membership of the legislative house if the court sentences a member to two years of imprisonment or more.

According to the prosecution, during the last Assembly elections, Abbas, who was contesting as a Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP) candidate from the Mau Sadar seat, had threatened the local administration during a public meeting at Paharpur in March 2022, saying he would "settle scores" after the elections. Abbas became an MLA for the first time in 2022 by winning the election under the Samajwadi Party-led alliance. The seat has now been declared vacant by Assembly Principal Secretary Pradeep Dubey. Following his disqualification, the SBSP will have five MLAs left in the 403-member UP Legislative Assembly.

# No use of horses & mules in Kedarnath Yatra after daylight: U'khand HC

**NARENDRA SETHI** @ Dehradun



PRIORITISING the welfare of animals vital to the Kedarnath pilgrimage, the Uttarakhand High Court has mandated a strict prohibition on the movement of horses and mules between sunset and sunrise on the arduous Char Dham Yatra route. No horse or mule will henceforth be permitted to operate on the Kedarnath trail before dawn or after dusk.

District authorities have issued a stern warning, stating that any operator found flouting these new regulations will face immediate and stringent action.

According to sources, thousands of horses and mules are an integral part of the pilgrimage, serving as the primary means of transport for both devotees, including senior citizens and those with walking difficulties, and essential supplies to the sacred shrine.

The new restrictions come in the wake of recent challenges faced by the animal transport system. Earlier this year, a widespread infection among the equine population led the Animal Husbandry Department to implement stringent restrictions, temporarily halting all horse and mule operations.

Significantly, days after the Char Dham Yatra began on April 30, the deaths of at least 20 horses and mules on the Kedarnath route in the initial weeks raised serious concerns over animal welfare, prompting authorities to impose a temporary 24-hour ban on equine operations.

BVRC Purushottam, Secretary of Animal Husbandry, underscored the department's commitment. "The health and welfare of these animals are paramount, as is the safety of the pilgrims," he stated, adding, "We are keeping a vigil. Any attempt to defy the court's directive will be met with immediate and stringent action."

# Shell-hit J&K villagers await relief amid assessment row

**FAYAZ WANI** @ Srinagar

TWO weeks after the ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan came into effect after three days of intense skirmishes following the May 7 Operation Sindoor, the ruling National Conference (NC) legislators from Uri and Poonch, the areas most affected by cross-border shelling, have claimed that the administration is yet to complete the damage assessment. However, the Chief Minister's advisor has asserted that the assessment has been finished and the government is now awaiting a central relief package.

**We have urged the govt to provide ₹10 lakh to fully damaged houses, ₹5 lakh to severely damaged houses and ₹3 lakh to partially damaged houses. This will help the affected families to rebuild their homes.**

Sajad Shafi, MLA

The Pakistani shelling in the border areas of J&K left at least 18 civilians dead including 13 in Poonch, 3 in Rajouri and one each in Uri and Jammu and over 100 injured. The worst-hit areas include Poonch, Rajouri, and Uri, where hundreds of houses and structures were damaged. MLA Uri Sajjad Shafi told this newspaper that the damage assessment by the district administration is ongoing but has not been completed. He noted that more than 500 houses in Uri were damaged, with some completely destroyed and others severely or partially damaged. The government has provided compensation ranging from Rs 6,500 to Rs 1.30 lakh, depending on the level of damage. However, Shafi urged the government to increase the relief amount. "We have requested Rs 10 lakh for fully damaged houses, Rs 5 lakh for severely damaged houses and Rs 3 lakh for partially damaged homes," he said, adding that these amounts would help the affected families rebuild their homes.

MLA Poonch Aijaz Jan also criticised the pace of the assessment in Poonch, stating it will take at least another week to complete. He called the government's relief offer "a joke" and demanded higher compensation, suggesting a minimum of Rs 5 to 10 lakh for affected families to rebuild their homes.

Despite these concerns, Nasir Aslam Wani, the Chief Minister's advisor, claimed that the damage assessment has been completed and the report has already been submitted to the government.

He confirmed that compensation was provided following SDRF norms. Wani added that the state is preparing a comprehensive relief package for submission to the central government and would act based on any assistance announced by Delhi. The border residents continue to press for adequate compensation, with many homes still in ruins.

# 9-yr-old Assam girl dances her way to glory, secures 3rd position in UK show

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** @ Guwahati

NINE-year-old Assam dance prodigy Binita Chettri made history by bagging the second runner-up position at Britain's Got Talent (BGT) 2025 reality show.

She is the first contestant from India to reach the finals of this global competition, representing the Gorkha community and the Indian subcontinent.

She hails from Bokajan, a small town in Karbi Anglong district. British magician Harry Moulding won the BGT title. The second place went to LED dance group 'The Blackouts.'

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma congratulated Binita on the feat.

"Dancing her way to glory. Many congratulations to our very own #BinitaChetry on securing the third spot at #BGTFinal. Her performances have mesmerised audiences from the Brahmaputra to the Thames and made us all proud. I wish her all the best for her future endeavours," he posted on X.

Nanda Kirati Dewan, general secretary of Bharatiya Gorkha Parisangh, Assam, said Binita had stunned the judges and audience with her outstanding performances, particularly her intricate dance routines which included physically demanding moves such as backflips.

"Behind her international success is the unwavering support of her father, Amar Chettri, who runs a small broiler farm in Assam and is actively involved in social and community affairs," Dewan said.

He said, recognising Binita's talent, the father arranged for her dance training, first in Guwahati and then in Jaipur, under the guidance of her aunt Amrita Devi and renowned choreographer Hardik Rawat.

"Binita's international popularity has sparked conversations across India, Nepal, Bhutan, and the wider Asian community. However, many viewers were unable to vote for her due to the finale's voting lines being restricted to the UK," added Dewan, who was also the coordinator of the BGT Binita Chetry Support Group.

**BIG TIME FOR BIG CATS**

# Joy as tigress at Sariska gives birth to four cubs

### New litter pushes count to 49

With this new addition, the total number of tigers in the park has risen to 49. This is now the third time in recent years that a tigress has given birth to a litter of four cubs.

**RAJESH ASNANI** @ Jaipur

TO the delight of tiger lovers in Rajasthan, a tigress in Sariska National Park has given birth to four cubs. With this, the total number of tigers in the park has risen to 49. Nearly two decades ago, all tigers in Sariska had been poached and the park was left without a single big cat. This is now the third time in recent years that a tigress has given birth to four cubs.

The tigress, known as ST-19, welcomed her four cubs in the Bareilly Badi area of Sariska Buffer Zone in Alwar. This marks the first time that four cubs have been born together in the buffer zone, which houses seven tigers and tigresses. Currently, there are a total of 11 tigers, tigresses and cubs in the buffer zone. The rise in number of tigers is also expected to boost tourism in the area, State Forest Minister Sanjay Sharma shared this information on social media.

The reserve stretches over a core tiger habitat area of 881 km sq and 322.23 km sq of buffer area making it a total of 1203.34 km sq area of tiger reserve. After it was found in January 2005 that there were no tigers left in Sariska, the big cat was reintroduced through government efforts.

# Cheetahs may find new home in Bundelkhand

### 2 other big predators in reserve

Once introduced at the reserve, which is spread in Damoh and Sagar districts of Bundelkhand and parts of Narsinghpur, the cheetahs will have two big co-predators — leopards and tigers.

**ANURAAG SINGH** @ Bhopal

CHEETAHS, known as the fastest animal on land, may start inhabiting the forests of Bundelkhand region by 2026. Efforts to create a suitable habitat have already begun, with plans to introduce these big cats to Madhya Pradesh's largest tiger reserve, the Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve, within the next year and a half.

Once introduced at the reserve, which is spread in Damoh and Sagar districts of Bundelkhand region besides parts of central MP's Narsinghpur district, the cheetahs will have not just one, but two co-predators -- leopards and tigers. They will also have smaller predators, including wolves, jackals and Asian wild dogs.

Currently, the leopards are the lone co-predators for the Namibian and South African cheetahs and their Indian born cubs at MP's Kuno National Park. Leopards will be the prospective co-predators for two South African male coalition Prabhas and Pavak (once they are released into the open from their enclosures) at cheetahs second home, the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary in Mandsaur district.

# UKRAINE STRIKES RUSSIAN BOMBERS AHEAD OF TALKS

## THE PROJECTILES WERE HIDDEN INSIDE TRUCKS AND TRANSPORTED TO THE PERIMETERS OF TARGETED AIRFIELDS DEEP INSIDE RUSSIA

**KYIV**

A Ukrainian drone attack has destroyed more than 40 Russian planes deep in Russia's territory, a Ukrainian security official told The Associated Press on Sunday, while Russia pounded Ukraine with missiles and drones a day before the two sides meet for a new round of direct talks in Istanbul.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to disclose operational details, said the attack took over 1 1/2-year to execute and was personally supervised by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The operation saw drones transported in containers carried by trucks deep into Russian territory, he said. The drones reportedly hit 41 bombers stationed at several airfields on Sunday afternoon, including the Belaya air base in Russia's Irkutsk region, more than 4,000 kilometers (2,500 miles) from Ukraine.

It is the first time that a Ukrainian drone has been seen in the region, local Gov Igor Kobzev said. He also said in a statement that the drone had been launched from a truck.

Russian officials in the Ryazan and Murmansk regions also reported drone activity on Sunday afternoon, but did not give further details.

The attack came the same day as Zelenskyy said Ukraine will send a delegation to Istanbul for a new round of direct peace talks with Russia on Monday.

In a statement on Telegram, Zelenskyy said that Defense Minister Rustem Umerov will lead the Ukrainian delegation. "We are doing everything to protect our independence, our state and our people," Zelenskyy said.

In this undated photo provided by the Ukrainian Security Service, head of the Security Service Vasyl Malyuk studies a photo of a map of Russia's strategic aviation location in his office in Ukraine | AP

Ukrainian officials had previously called on the Kremlin to provide a promised memorandum setting out its position on ending the war before the meeting takes place.

Moscow had said it would share its memorandum during the talks. Russia on Sunday launched the biggest number of drones — 472 — on Ukraine since the full-scale invasion in February 2022, Ukraine's air force said. Russian forces also launched seven missiles alongside the barrage of drones, said Yuriy Ignat, head of communications for the air force. *AP*

### Putin's hardline peace plan underscores his demands

Moscow: By making harsh, uncompromising demands in peace talks with Ukraine while continuing to pummel it with waves of missiles and drones, Russian President Vladimir Putin is sending a clear message: He will only accept a settlement on his terms and will keep fighting until they're met. At the same time, he has sought to avoid angering US President Donald Trump by praising his diplomacy and declaring Moscow's openness to peace talks — even as he set maximalist conditions that are rejected by Kyiv and the West.

### 12 Ukrainian soldiers killed in hit; commander resigns

A Russian missile strike on a Ukrainian army training area killed at least 12 soldiers and wounded dozens more Sunday, Kyiv said, in a rare admission of its military losses. Kyiv did not say where the strike took place, but stressed the soldiers were not taking part in a "mass gathering" and most were in their shelters during the attack. Ukrainian ground forces commander Mykhailo Drapaty said he was resigning, saying he felt "responsibility" for the deaths of at least 12 soldiers in a Russian strike on a training ground.

# Explosions collapse two bridges in western Russia, killing seven

**MOSCOW**

EXPLOSIONS caused two bridges to collapse and derailed two trains in western Russia overnight, officials said Sunday, without saying what had caused the blasts. In one of the incidents, seven people were killed and dozens were injured.

The first bridge, in the Bryansk region on the border with Ukraine, collapsed on top of a passenger train on Saturday, causing the casualties. The train's driver was among those killed, state-run Russian Railways said. Hours later, officials said a second train derailed when the bridge beneath it collapsed in the nearby Kursk region, which also borders Ukraine.

In that collapse, a freight train was thrown off its rails onto the road below as the explosion collapsed the bridge, local acting Gov. Alexander Khinshtein said Sunday. The crash sparked a fire, but there were no casualties, he said.

Russia's Investigative Committee, the country's top criminal investigation agency, said in a statement that explosions had caused the two bridges to collapse, but did not give further details. Several hours later, it edited the statement, which was posted on social media, to remove the words "explosions" but did not provide an explanation. The committee said that it would be investigating the incidents as potential acts of terrorism.

Rescue workers cleared debris from both sites, while some of those injured were transported to Moscow for treatment. Photos posted by government agencies in Bryansk appeared to show train carriages ripped apart and lying amid fallen concrete from the collapsed bridge. Other footage on social media was apparently taken from inside vehicles on the road that had managed to avoid driving onto the bridge before it collapsed. *AFP*

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client is proposing to enter into a transaction with respect to the converted land bearing **Survey No. 106/7** measuring **12 Acres 08 Guntas** situated at **Amruthahalli Village, Yelahanka Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk,** morefully described in the schedule hereunder and hereinafter referred to as the **"Schedule Property"** as detailed below. The Schedule Property is owned by **(1) B M Vijayakumar (2) B M Prithviraj (3) B M Chandraprabha (4) M Murali, (5) Lakshmi P, (6) B.P.Ambica, (7) B.P. Chaitra all daughters of B.M. Prithviraj; (8) H.N.Yogish, (9) N.Bhargavi both children of B M Chandraprabha (10) Akshay Srinivas, (11) Aanya Lakshmi are children of M. Murali ("Owners").**

Any person having any right, title, claim or interest in the **Schedule Property** or against the Owners must notify the undersigned with documentary proof thereof within **Eight (8) days** of this publication. In case no such notice is received by us within **Eight (8) days** from the date of publication of this notice, it shall be presumed that the title of the Owners with respect to the **Schedule Property** is clear, marketable and free from encumbrance/s of any kind whatsoever and no person has any right, title or interest of any nature whatsoever in respect of the **Schedule Property** or any part thereof. Claims or alleged interest, if any, which are not received within **Eight (8) days** from the date of publication of this notice shall be deemed to have been waived and disregarded for all intents and purposes and shall not be binding on our client.

**SCHEDULE PROPERTY**

All that piece and parcel of converted land bearing **Survey No. 106/7** measuring **12 acres 08 guntas** situated at **Amruthahalli Village, Yelahanka Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk,** and bounded on:

**East by : Compound Wall, Private Property and Amrutha Nagar;**
**West by : Bellary Road;**
**North by : Land bearing Sy.No.106/6 belonging to Jayaram;**
**South by : Land bearing Sy.No.106/8 Amruthahalli belonging to India Packaging Products.**

**Malini Raju**
**Vidhyadhare. S**
**AZB & Partners,**
Level 5, 37 Cunningham,
Cunningham Road, Bengaluru -560 052.
Date : 02-06-2025 Place : Bengaluru

## PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby put to notice that my client intends to purchase the Schedule Property from its original owners namely **1) Sri. RAJASHEKHARAIAH.C** S/o. Late Chikkaveerappa, **2) Sri.R.S.MAHESH** S/o. late.Shivashankaraiah, **3) Sri. RENUKAPPA** S/o. late.Chikkaveerappa, **4) Smt.R.J.VIJAYA** W/o. late. R.C.Paramashivaiah **5) Sri.VARUN .R.D** S/o. late. R.C.Dharanesh **6) Sri. SHIVAKUMAR.M** S/o Mallikarjunaiah R.C and their family members **7) Smt.VANAJA KUMARI** W/o. Late.Nagaraja .C, **8) Kumari. C.N.VARSHINI** D/o. late.Nagaraja.C, **9) Kumari. C.N.THANUSHREE** D/o. late.Nagaraja.C, all are residing at Raghuvanahalli, Thalaghattapura, Bangalore – 560062

Any person having any right, title, claim or interest in the Schedule Property must notify the undersigned with documentary proof thereof within **Ten (10) days** of this publication. In case no such notice is received by us within **Ten (10) days** from the date of publication of this notice, it shall be presumed that the title of the aforesaid owner with respect to the Schedule Property is clear, marketable and free from encumbrance/s of any kind whatsoever and no person has any right, title or interest of any nature whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Property or any part thereof. Claims or alleged interest, if any, which are not received within **Ten (10) days** from the date of publication of this notice shall be deemed to have been waived and disregarded for all intents and purposes and shall not be binding on my client.

**SCHEDULE PROPERTY**

All the piece and parcel of the Immovable Property being Undeveloped Converted Land bearing **Sy.No.25/9** (Old Sy.No.25/1) measuring **1 Acre 18 Guntas of Hyne Land and 01.04 Guntas of Kharab Land,** situated at **Raghuvanahalli Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore District** and bounded on:

**East by : Land bearing Sy.No.25/1;**
**West by : Land bearing Sy.No.20;**
**North by : Land bearing Sy.No.26;**
**South by : Land bearing Sy.No.22.**

**G.V. Sudhakar,** Advocate
No. 3, 4, 5 & 8, First Floor,
Abhayashrama Complex,
4th Cross, Wilson Garden,
Bangalore-560 027
Ph : 080-42194390, 9886359644

## PUBLIC NOTICE

**Form No. URC-2**
**Advertisement giving notice about registration under Part I of Chapter XXI of the Act**
**[Pursuant to section 374(b) of the Companies Act, 2013 and rule 4(1) of the Companies (Authorised to Register) Rules, 2014]**

Notice is hereby given that in pursuance of sub-section (2) of section 366 of the Companies Act, 2013, an application is proposed to be made after fifteen days hereof but before the expiry of thirty days hereinafter to the Registrar of Companies, Bangalore, that ACTIVUS INDUSTRIAL DESIGN AND BUILD PRIVATE LIMITED a business entity may be registered under Part I of Chapter XXI of the Companies Act 2013, as a company limited by shares.

2) The principal objects of the company are as follows:

a)To carry on the businesses of proprietors oflands, flats, marionettes, dwelling, houses, shops., offices, industrial estates, leases of lands, flats and other immovable properties and purchase, take on lease or otherwise acquire and hold and lands or buildings of any tenure or description wherever situated, or right or interests therein or connected therewith to prepare building, sites and to construct, reconstruct, pull-down, renovate, alter, improve, decorate, furnish and maintain flats, marionettes, dwelling houses, shops, offices, blocks, buildings, industrial estates, works and conveniences basis and transfer such building to co-operative society, limited companies or association of person or association of person or individual as the case may be ,to lay out roads, pleasure gardens, recreation grounds, auditorium, theatres and sports pavilion to plant, drain. or otherwise improve land building or any part thereof.

b) To do the business of Housing by constructing houses, bungalows row houses, farm, houses, resorts with or without adjoining gardens and selling, let exchange, deal with, dispose of the same and to prepare, manufacture and deal in materials, necessary for building and to carry on business as building contractors and developers and to acquire land and plots for colonization or otherwise, sell plots, flats, construct buildings for sale and rent or both on instalments or otherwise.

c) To take up the business of builders, contractors, land developers, property owners and to act as estate agentsand property consultants and dealers in and manufacturers of prefabricated and pre-cast houses, buildings and erections and materials, tools, implements, machinery and metal ware in connection therewith or incidental thereto and to carry on any other business that is customarily, usually and conveniently carried on therewith.

3) A copy of the draft memorandum and articles of association of the proposed company may be inspected at the office at NO 125, 7TH CROSS ROAD, OFF BANNERGHTTA MAIN ROAD, DOLLAR LAYOUT, BTM 2ND STAGE, BILEKHALLI, Bannerghatta Road, Bangalore, Bangalore South, Karnataka, India, 560076

4) Notice is hereby given that any person objecting to this application may communicate theirobjection in writing to the Registrar at E Wing, 2nd Floor, Kendriya Sadan, Santhosapuram, Kudremukh Colony, Koramangala, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560034, within twenty-one days from the date of publication of this notice, with a copy to thecompany at its registered office.

Dated this on 02-06-2025

**Names of Applicant:**
1.Jalander Reddy Chintalapalli
2.Sathiya Narayanan Kannan
3.Chintalapalli Madhukar Reddy 4.Kavitha Anand

## CITY UNION BANK LIMITED

CUB TRUST AND EXCELLENCE SINCE 1904

**Credit Recovery and Management Department**
**Administrative Office :** No. 24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612 001. **E-Mail id :** crmd@cityunionbank.in, **Ph :** 0435-2432322, **Fax :** 0435-2431746

### RE-TENDER-CUM-AUCTION SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002

The following property/ies mortgaged to **City Union Bank Limited** will be sold in Re-Tender-cum Public Auction by the Authorised Officer of the Bank, under Rule 8 (6) & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, under the SARFAESI Act, 2002, for recovery of a sum of **Rs.29,25,151/- (Rupees Twenty Nine Lakh Twenty Five Thousand One Hundred and Fifty One only)** as on **23-04-2025** together with further interest to be charged from **24-04-2025** onwards and other expenses, any other dues to the Bank by the borrowers / guarantors **No.1) M/s. S.V. Silks, No.85/3703, Ganigarapete, Doddaballapur, Karnataka - 561203. No.2) Mr. Vishwanath, S/o. Shivanna, D.No.3790, 28th Ward, Taluk Office Road, Deshadapete, Behind Old SRM, Doddaballapur - 561203. No.3) Mrs. Kanyakumari CP, W/o. Vishwanath, D.No.3790, 28th Ward, Taluk Office Road, Deshadapete, Behind Old SRM, Doddaballapur - 561203**

**Immovable Properties Mortgaged to our Bank**

**Schedule - A : (Property Owned by Mr. Vishwanath, S/o. Shivanna)**

Property Situated at 4th Ward, Deshadapete, Doddaballapur - 561203, Old Khata No.2461, Present Khata No.85/79/3697/1, Present Khata SL No.350, measuring : East-West 8 feet and North-South 45 feet, Bounded by : East : Property of Item No.2, West : Properties of Channabasavaradya & Jayanna, North : Compound of Masjid, South : Road.

**Schedule - B : (Property Owned by Mr. Vishwanath, S/o. Shivanna)**

Property Situated at 4th Ward, Deshadapete, Doddaballapur - 561203, Old Khata No.2459, Present Khata No.80/75/3694/1, Present Khata SL No.349, measuring : East-West 22 feet and North-South 33 feet, Bounded by : East : Properties of Gajendra, Veerabhadraradya & Others West : Property of Item No.1, North : Property of Item No.3, South : Road.

**Schedule - C : (Property Owned by Mr. Vishwanath, S/o. Shivanna)**

Property Situated at 4th Ward, Deshadapete, Doddaballapur - 561203, Old Khata No.3694/3695/3697/3698/2, Present Khata No.77/74/3694, Present Khata SL No.348, measuring : East-West 15 feet and North-South 15 feet, Bounded by : East : Properties of Jayanna & others, West : Property of Item No.1, North : Compound of Masjid, South : Property of Item No.2. Total Extent of Land 1,311 Sq.Ft. RCC Ground Floor & First Floor Residential Building constructed therein.

**Reserve Price : Rs.27,00,000/-**
**(Rupees Twenty Seven Lakh only)** (For Schedule - A, B and C)

**RE-AUCTION DETAILS**

| Date of Re-Tender-cum-Auction Sale | Venue |
|---|---|
| 26-06-2025 | **City Union Bank Limited, Doddaballapur Branch,** 1108/1116/925, Hungi Complex, Cinema Street, Doddaballapur, Bengaluru Urban, Karnataka - 561203. Telephone No.080-27622082, Cell No.9341673937. |

**Terms and Conditions of Re-Tender-cum-Auction Sale :**

**(1)** The intending bidders should be present in person for the auction and participate personally and give a declaration in writing to the effect that he/she is bidding for himself / herself. **(2)** The intending bidders may obtain the Tender Forms from **The Manager, City Union Bank Limited, Doddaballapur Branch, 1108/1116/925, Hungi Complex, Cinema Street, Doddaballapur, Bengaluru Urban, Karnataka - 561203. (3)** The intending bidders should submit their bids only in the Tender Form prescribed in sealed envelopes addressed to **The Authorised Officer, City Union Bank Ltd.,** together with a Pay Order / Demand Draft for an EMD of **10%** of the Reserve Price, drawn in favour of **"City Union Bank Ltd.", on or before 12.00 Noon** on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. **(4)** For inspection of the property and other particulars, the intending purchaser may contact **Telephone No:080-27622082, Cell No :9341673937. (5)** The property/ies are sold on "As-is-where-is", "As-is-what-is" and "whatever-there is" basis. **(6)** The sealed tenders will be opened in the presence of the intending bidders at **01.00 p.m.** on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. Though in general the sale will be by way of closed tenders, the Authorised Officer may, at his sole discretion, conduct an Open Auction among the interested bidders who desire to quote a bid higher than the one received in the closed tender process, and in such an event, the sale shall be conferred on the person making highest bid. The sale, however, is subject to confirmation of City Union Bank Limited. **(7)** The successful bidder shall have to pay **25% (inclusive of EMD paid)** of the sale amount **immediately** on completion of sale and the balance amount of **75%** within **15 days** from the date of confirmation of sale, failing which the initial deposit of **25%** shall be forfeited. **(8)** The Sale Certificate will be issued by the Authorised Officer in favour of the successful purchaser only after receipt of the entire sale consideration within the time limit stipulated herein. **(9)** The successful purchaser shall bear the charges/fees payable for conveyance, such as stamp duty, registration fee etc., as applicable under law. **(10)** The successful bidder should pay the statutory dues (lawful house tax, electricity charges and other dues), TDS, GST if any, due to Government, Government Undertaking and local bodies. **(11)** The Authorised Officer shall have all the powers to accept or reject the bids or postpone or cancel the sale without assigning any reason whatsoever.

**Place : Kumbakonam, Date : 30-05-2025** **Authorised Officer**

**Regd. Office :** 149, T.S.R. (Big) Street, Kumbakonam, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu - 612 001, **CIN -** L65110TN1904PLC001287, **Telephone No.** 0435-2402322, **Fax :** 0435-2431746, **Website :** www.cityunionbank.com

## ODISHA HYDRO POWER CORPORATION LIMITED

OHPC

(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)
Regd. Office: OHPC Corporate Office, Bhoi Nagar, Janpath, Bhubaneswar -22,
Ph: 2542983, 2542802, 2545526, 2542826, Website: www.ohpcltd.com
**CIN : U40101OR1995SGC003963**

**ADVERTISEMENT NO.OHPC:HQ:HRD: RECTT: 01/2025 Dated: 31.05.2025**

### CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS THROUGH GATE-2025

**The Corporation intends to recruit young, bright and energetic professionals as Graduate Engineer Trainees (GETs) in various disciplines through GATE-2025.**

Odisha Hydro Power Corporation Limited (OHPC) is an ISO 9001:2008, ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001 certified Gold rated State Public Sector Undertaking (with installed capacity of **2099.80** MW) having **6 (six)** power projects within the state and one inter-State power project. OHPC is also promoting investment in renewable energy projects and various green energy sources through GEDCOL (a wholly owned subsidiary of OHPC). The Company is also taking up new Hydro Power Projects on its own including the Pumped Storage Projects and Small Hydro Projects. OHPC intends to recruit bright, qualified and energetic professionals to be inducted as GRADUATE ENGINEER TRAINEES (GETs) in various disciplines through **valid GATE score -2025** only as per the following for their placement at various units & project sites.

| GET (Electrical) | GET (Civil) | GET (Mechanical) | GET (Instrumentation & Control) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 60 | 2 | 4 | 3 |

**Important Dates:-**

Start date for submission of application in offline mode & payment of application fee - **06.06.2025**

Last date for receipt of the hard copy of applications in complete shape - **05.07.2025**

***The detailed advertisement containing the category wise vacancy position, eligibility criteria, remuneration, procedure for offline application, all other terms & conditions and application format will be available shortly on the company's website-www.ohpcltd.com***

**CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (HR)**

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my client, Sri.Marirangappa Shashi Kumar, S/o Sri.Mari Rangappa J, aged about 51 years, R/O.#1534, 6th 'C' Main, 1st 'C' Cross, Near Maruthi Medicals, RPC Layout, Vijaynagar, Hampinagar, Bangalore North, Karnataka - 560 104, India, Mob No.9845020498, has resigned from the position of First Director of **M/s.ELITE TEKNICA PRIVATE LIMITED,** Corporate Identification Number (CIN): U28999KA2017PTC100321, having its registered office at No.10-21, Lakshmipura Main Road, Abbigere, Chikkabanavara Post, Bangalore Urban, Karnataka, India, with effect from 05.04.2024.

My client affirms that his resignation from the position of First Director, along with the corresponding cessation filing through Form No.DIR-12 under Section 168 of the Companies Act, 2013, and the mandatory attachments-including the Notice of Resignation, Evidence of Cessation, and Board Resolution-has been duly submitted by the company and communicated to the Registrar of Companies (ROC). Furthermore, my client confirms that the resignation has been duly processed and officially recorded.

My client affirms that he is **no longer associated** with the affairs or operations of the said company in any manner whatsoever from the aforementioned date. My Client shall not be held responsible or liable for any acts, transactions, commitments, obligations, or representations made on behalf of the company hereafter.

This is to inform the general public and all concerned that my client **hereby cautions** that any dealings with the said company shall be at their **own risk and responsibility.**

**Sd/- Sri. Imshad Pasha,** Advocate
A.N Law Associates,
No. FF-31&32, HHS & HMS Complex,
Cubbonpet Main Road, Bangalore.
PH: 080-22219914. MOB: 9845229914
Date: 31.05.2025

## PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby put to notice that **Sri.ARUN PRASAD** S/o Late Krishna Rao and **Smt.ANITHA KRISHNA RAO** D/o Late Krishna Rao, both residing at No.5/32, 3rd Cross, Laljinagar, Lakkasandra, Bangalore South, Adugodi, Bangalore represents that they are the owners of the Schedule Property described below and further represents that they have lost/misplaced the Original Sale Deed dated 18/09/1969 registered as Document No. 1159/1969-70, Book I, Volume 76, Pages 17 to 19 registered before the Sub-registrar, Jayanagar, Bangalore executed by Sri.L.C.Shivashankarappa in favour of their father Krishna Rao in respect of Schedule Property.

Further, my client intends to purchase the Schedule Property from the aforesaid owners. If any person/s having any right, title or claims, objections or interest over the Schedule Property may lodge their claims/objections with documentary proof within **10 days** from this day to the undersigned counsel. Failing which, it shall be deemed that there are no claims objections over the Schedule Property and my client shall proceed with the transaction and complete the sale transaction to purchase the Schedule Property free from all encumbrances by procuring the Certified copies and the same will be construed and considered as the Originals for all practical and legal purposes. Any claims received beyond **10 days** will not be considered.

**SCHEDULE**

All the piece and parcel of the Property bearing Municipal **No.32 (Site No.5)** carved out of Sy.No.10, PID No.63/10/32 measuring East to West **30 Ft** and North to South **45 Ft,** totally measuring **1350 Sqft** with a building thereon, situated at **3rd Cross, L.C.Shankarappa Layout (Lalji Nagara Layout), Lakkasandra, Bangalore,** within the administrative jurisdiction of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palik (BBMP) Ward No.146-Lakkasandra and bounded on:

**East by : Property bearing No.6;**
**West by : Property bearing No.4;**
**North by : Road;**
**South by : Private Property.**

**G.V. Sudhakar,** Advocate
No. 3, 4, 5 & 8, First Floor,
Abhayashrama Complex,
4th Cross, Wilson Garden,
Bangalore-560 027
Ph : 080-42194390, 9886359644

## BEFORE THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - II, AT BANGALORE

BSNL Building, 4th Floor,
Telephone House, Rajbhavan Road,
Bangalore–560 001.

**O.A. No.1173/ 2021**

**State Bank of India** Constitued under the State Bank of India Act 1955, Having its Corporate Office at Mumbai and amongst other Branches one called Bangalore City J.C. Road Bangalore- Represented by Chief Manager Sri Dilip A Kembhavi **..Applicant**

**V/s**

**01. M/s. Prop. Saffron Proplus Pvt. Ltd.,** Previously known as M/s. S. P. Coats Pvt. Ltd., No. 3/1, Muneshwara Nagar, Neas Government School Hegganahalli, Bangalore - 560 091 by its Director Sri Anil Bhandari
**02. Sri Anil Bhandari** S/o. Sri R. K Bhandary, Managing Director of M/s. Saffron Proplus Pvt. Ltd.,
**03. Smt. Manju Bhandari** W/o. Sri Anil Bhandary, The Director of M/s. Saffron Proplus Pvt. Ltd., both are residing at 'Mantri ' Alpyne, No. 1-204, 1 Block, Uttarahalli Main Road, Bangalore - 560 062.
**04. Smt. T. Shanthamma,** W/o. Sri Narayan, The Director of M/s.affron Proplus Pvt. Ltd. No. 103, K. H. Ranganatha Colony, 3rd Cross, 3rd Main, Chamarajpet, Bangalore - 560 018.
**05.Smt. Anu Bhandray** D/o. Sri Anil Bhandary, The Director of M/s.Saffron Proplus Pvt. Ltd.
**06. Smt. Minu Bhandary,** D/o. Sri Anil Bhandary, The Director of The Director of M/s.Saffron Proplus Pvt. Ltd. 5 & 6 are residing at 'Mantri ' Alpyne, No. 1-204, 1 Block, Uttarahalli Main Road, Bangalore - 560 062. **...Defendants**

**SUMMONS ISSUED UNDER RULE 23(VIII) OF THE DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL (PROCEDURE) RULES**

**01. M/s. Prop. Saffron Proplus Pvt. Ltd.,** Previously known as M/s. S. P. Coats Pvt. Ltd., No. 3/1, Muneshwara Nagar, Neas Government School Hegganahalli, Bangalore - 560 091 by its Director Sri Anil Bhandari
**02. Sri Anil Bhandari** S/o. Sri R. K Bhandary, Managing Director of M/s. Saffron Proplus Pvt. Ltd.,
**03. Smt. Manju Bhandari** W/o. Sri Anil Bhandary, The Director of M/s. Saffron Proplus Pvt. Ltd., both are residing at 'Mantri ' Alpyne, No. 1-204, 1 Block, Uttarahalli Main Road, Bangalore - 560 062.
**04. Smt. T. Shanthamma,** W/o. Sri Narayan, The Director of M/s.Saffron Proplus Pvt. Ltd. No. 103, K. H. Ranganatha Colony, 3rd Cross, 3rd Main, Chamarajpet, Bangalore - 560 018.
**05.Smt. Anu Bhandray** D/o. Sri Anil Bhandary, The Director of M/s.Saffron Proplus Pvt. Ltd.
**06. Smt. Minu Bhandary,** D/o. Sri Anil Bhandary, The Director of The Director of M/s.Saffron Proplus Pvt. Ltd. 5 & 6 are residing at 'Mantri ' Alpyne, No. 1-204, 1 Block, Uttarahalli Main Road, Bangalore - 560 062.

**Whereas,** the applicant has instituted an application under Section 19 of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act,1993 against the defendants for recovery of a Sum of **Rs.2,70,99,082.00** (Rupees Two Crores Seventy Lakhs Ninety Nine Thousand Eighty Two Only), together with current and future interest an for other reliefs.

The above mentioned defendant is therefore hereby directed to appear before the Tribunal in person or through an Advocate or duly authorized agent in support of the defense to show cause within 30 days from the date of publication or on **17.09.2025 at 10:30 A.M,** as to why the relief prayed for should not be granted. Take notice that in case of default, the application will be heard and determined in your absence.

Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal, on this **13th day of May 2025.**

Sd/- Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal -II,
Bangalore- 560 001

Advocate for the Applicant
**T S Krishna Murthy,** No. 64/1, Dr. D. V. G. Road, Basavanagudi, Bangalore - 04.

## BEFORE THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL -I AT BANGALORE

4th Floor, BSNL Building
Rajbhavan Road, Bangalore–560 001.

**O. A. No.1315/2023**

**Between: Union Bank of India,** SSI Finance Branch, Yeshwanthpur - 560 022. **...Applicant**

**And**

**01. M/s. Rotix Technology Private Limited,** A Company registered under the Companies Act, Havingits Registered Office at : No. SB/56, 2nd Cross 1st Stage, Peenya Industrial Estate, Bangalore - 560 058, Represented by its Directors:
1. Mrs. Prathibha Sondekoppa Raju,
2. Mr. Vijaya Anand Kumar.
**02. Mrs. Prathibha Sondekoppa Raju,** W/o. Raju, Aged about 35 years, Residing at : No. 215, 7th Cross, 8th Main, Bhuvaneshwari Nagar, T. Dasarahalli, Bangalore - 560 057.
**04. Smt. Nithyashree R. C.** D/o. Chandrashekar Rajanahalli Ningappa, Aged about 35 years, Residing at : No. 720, Lakshmi Ranganatha Nilaya, 18th Main, MEI Layout, Bangalore - 560 073.
**05. Smt. Manjula H. B.,** D/o. Sri Basavanna, Aged about 42 years, Residing at : No. 10, 1st A Cross, 3rd Stage, Athimiya Gelayara Balaga, Mahalakshmi puram, Bangalore- 560 086.
**06. Sri Vijay Anand Kumar,** S/o. Sri Srinivas, Aged about 48 yeras, Residing at : No. 215, 7th Cross, 8th Main, Bhuva neshwari Nagar, T. Dasarahalli, Bangalore - 560 052. **...Defendants**

**SUMMONS ISSUED UNDER RULE 23(VIII) OF THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL (PROCEDURE) RULES, 1993**

**Whereas,** this Applicant has instituted an application under Section 19 of the Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993, against you for recovery of a sum of **Rs.41,90,308.59** (Rupees Forty One Lakhs Ninety Thousand Three Hundred and Eight and Paise Fifty Nine Only) together with the agreed rate of interest at 16.20% p.a, compounded monthly with costs and other reliefs. You are therefore hereby required to show cause within 30 days from the date of this publication or on **08.07.2025 at 10:30 a.m.** in the forenoon in person or by a pleader/ Advocate duly instructed as to why the relief prayed for should not be granted.

Take notice that in case of default, the application will be heard and determined in your absence.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Tribunal on this the **24th day of January 2025.**

**By Order of the Tribunal**
**Sd/- Registrar**
**Debts Recovery Tribunal, Bengaluru**

## Aptus Value Housing Finance India Limited

APTUS

8B, Doshi Towers, 205, Poonamalle High Road, Kilpauk, Chennai-600 010.Telephone: 044-4565 0003

**Possession Notice Appendix IV ( Under Rule8 (1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)**

Whereas, the undersigned being the authorized officer of **Aptus Value Housing Finance India Limited** under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act,2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) read with Rule 3 of the SecurityInterest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notice calling upon theborrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice beingwithin60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and thepublic in general that the undersigned has taken **"Symbolic Possession"** of the property describedherein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rule.

| Sl. No. | Loan Account No. | Borrower/s/ Co-borrower/s & Guarantors Name | Description of the Mortgaged Properties | Demand Notice Date | Possession Outstanding Amount (Rs.) | Date and Type of Possession Taken |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | APEEN 0033114 | 1.Mrs. Radha, 2.Mr. Puttaiah and 3.Mr. Ravikumar | All that piece and parcel of the immovable property New Municipal khatha No. 874/1183/486/1 ,old Property No. 1183/486/1, a portion of Sy No. 41/1, Unique ID no. 152900402500220281, Situated at Bidadi Village & Hobli, Ramanagar Taluk, Ramanagar, Now comes under the limits of Bidadi TMC , measuring East to West 12.192 Sq.mtrs nor 40 ft and North to South 12.192 Sq. nor 40 ft in all measuring 1600 Sq. ft and **bounded on:. North By:** Property belongs to Puttaiah and thereafter Nagesh Singh, **South By:** Property belongs to Bojali, **East By:** Road, **West By:** Property belongs to Ramakrishna. | 23-01-2025 | **Rs. 11,44,405/-** (Rupees Eleven Lakhs Forty Four Thousand Four Hundred Five Only) as on 28.04.2025 | 27-05-2025 Symbolic Possession |
| 2. | APEEN 0127853 | 1.Mr. Shivarj, 2.Mrs. Rukmini and 3.Ms. Sudha | All That piece and parcel of immovable property bearing No.281/112/1, Village Property No.152900202801000233, Situated at Gadasahalli Village, Shivanahalli Grama Panchayath, Kasaba Hobli, kanakapura Taluk, Ramanagara District. Measuring East West: 6.096 Mtr, North South: 12.192 Mtr, Total 74.32 Sq Mtr, **bounded on. North By:** Road, **South By:** Propertybelongs to Devamma, **East By:** Property belongs to Muneshawari and Savitha, **West By:** Property belongs to Shivaraju. | 18-02-2025 | **Rs. 9,33,113/-** (Rupees Nine Lakhs Thirty Three Thousand One Hundred Thirteen Only) as on 28.04.2025 | |
| 3. | AKEN GE0124946 | 1.Mr. Venkatagiri, 2.Mr. Mohan Kumar K V, 3.Mrs. Venkatalakshmamma and 4.Mr. Prashanth Kumar A | All that piece and parcel of the Immovable Property Sy No. 51/1, Khatha No. 73, Kanakpura Village, in limits of Kallahalli Mandala Panchayat, Kasaba Hobli, Kanakpura Taluk, Ramnagar District . Measuring East to West 50 ft ,North to South 30 ft in total measuring 1500 sq ft and **bounded by:- North By:** Land Belonging to Son of Vavayya, **South By:** Land Belonging to Navalachari, **East By:** Remaining Property Sri. Madhe Gowda, **West By:** Kodihalli Road. | 18-02-2025 | **Rs. 14,72,330/** (Rupees Fourteen Lakhs Seventy Two Thousand Three Hundred Thirty Only) as on 28.04.2025 | |

The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of **Aptus Value Housing Finance India Limited** The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

**Place: BIDADI, GADASAHALLI AND KANAKAPURA** **Sd/- Authorised Officer Aptus Value Housing Finance India Limited,**

## JANA SMALL FINANCE BANK

(A Scheduled Commercial Bank)

**Registered Office:** **The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.10/1, 11/2 &12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangala Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071.**

### E-AUCTION NOTICE

**PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SALE THROUGH E-AUCTION UNDER THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT (SARFAESI ACT) 2002, READ WITH PROVISO RULE 8(6) & 9 OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES 2002.**

The undersigned as authorised officer of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** has **taken possession** of the following property in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(4) of the SARFAESI ACT. The Borrower in particular and public at large are informed that online auction (e-auction)of the mortgage property in the below mentioned account for realisation of dues of the Bank will be held on **"AS IS WHERE IS BASIS "** and **"AS IS WHAT IS BASIS"** on the date as prescribed as here under.

| Sr. No. | Loan Account Number | Name of Original Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor | Date of 13-2 Notice | Date of Possession | Present Outstanding balance as on 30.05.2025 | Date & Time of Inspection of the property | Reserve Price in INR | Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in INR | Date and Time of E-Auction | Last Date Time & Place for submission of Bid |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 46989630000751 | 1) Mr. Narasimhamurthy H, 2) Mrs. Jayamma G | 07.11.2024 | 10.04.2025 | Rs.5,78,430.38 (Rupees Five Lakhs Seventy Eight Thousand Four Hundred Thirty and Thirty Eight Paisa Only) | 11.06.2025 Time: 09:30 AM to 05:00 PM | Rs.10,16,000/- (Rupees Ten Lakh Sixteen Thousand Only) | Rs.1,01,600/- (Rupees One Lakh One Thousand Six Hundred Only) | 17.06.2025 @ 02:00 PM | 16.06.2025, Till 5.00 PM Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd., The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.10/1, 11/2 & 12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangla Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071 |

**Details of Secured Assets:** All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing Assessment No.226/296/2, E Katha No.150300300900320226, situated at Kodihalli Village comes within the Channadevi Agrahara Village Panchayath, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, Measuring East to West: 5.0292 Meters, North to South: 16.764 Meters, Totally Measuring 84.31 Sq.mtrs and **Bounded on the: East by:** Sandu, **West by:** Bylappa House, **North by:** Charandi, **South by:** Road.

The properties are being held on **"AS IS WHERE IS BASIS"** & **"AS IS WHAT IS BASIS"** and the E-Auction will be conducted **'On Line'.** The auction will be conducted through the Bank's approved service provider **M/s. 4 Closure** at the web portal **https://bankauctions.in** & **www.foreclosureindia.com.** For more information and For details, help, procedure and online training on e-auction, prospective bidders may contact **M/s. 4 Closure; Contact Mr. M Srinivasulru Contact Number: 8142000809. Email id: info@bankauctions.in/ srinivas@bankauctions.in.**

For further details on terms and conditions to take part in e-auction proceedings and any for any query relating to property please contact **Jana Small Finance Bank authorized officers Mr. Ranjan Naik (Mob. No.6362952653), Mr. Umesh (Mob. No.8050149617) & Mrs. Syeda (Mob. No.7400445147).** To the best of knowledge and information of the Authorised Officer, there are no encumbrances on the properties. However the intending bidders should make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances, title of property put on prior to submitting their bid. No conditional bid will be accepted. This is also a notice to the above named Borrowers/ Guarantor's/ Mortgagors about e-auction scheduled for the mortgaged properties. The Borrower/ Guarantor/ Mortgagor are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned above along with up to date interest and ancillary expenses before the date of auction, failing which the property will be sold and balance dues if any will be recovered with interest and cost.

**Date: 02.06.2025, Place: Bangalore Rural** **Sd/- Authorized Officer, Jana Small Finance Bank Limited**

# How to create retirement corpus via MFs

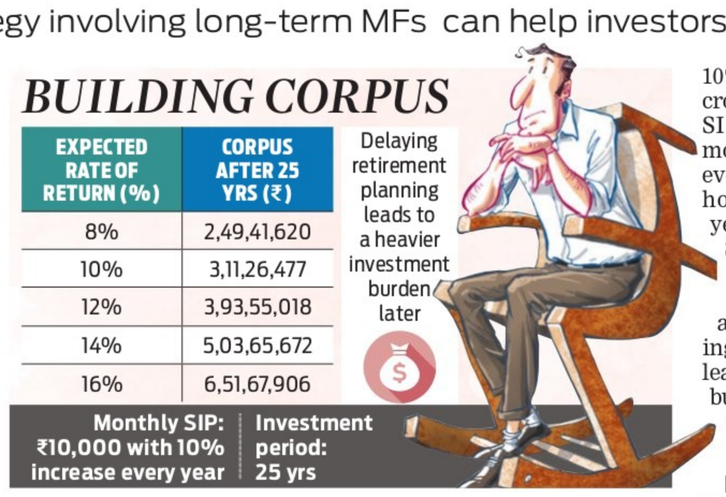
A well-planned strategy involving long-term MFs can help investors build the required retirement corpus

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

CREATING a retirement corpus of ₹5 crore or even ₹10 crore may seem like a daunting task for a middle-class salaried individual, but a systematic investment approach can make the journey more manageable. Starting early and maintaining consistent investment discipline are key factors in achieving this long-term financial goal.

### Mutual Funds: A simple and effective tool

One can create such a corpus through MFs—a no-frills investment option that provides exposure to equity, debt, gold, and silver. A well-planned investment strategy involving long-term mutual funds, index funds, and a diversified portfolio can help build the required corpus over time.


BUILDING CORPUS
EXPECTED RATE OF RETURN (%)
CORPUS AFTER 25 YRS (₹)
8% 2,49,41,620
10% 3,11,26,477
12% 3,93,55,018
14% 5,03,65,672
16% 6,51,67,906
Delaying retirement planning leads to a heavier investment burden later
Monthly SIP: ₹10,000 with 10% increase every year
Investment period: 25 yrs

### Step-up Investment strategy: A smarter way to invest

A step-up investment strategy—gradually increasing the monthly SIP amount as income grows—can ease the pressure of retirement planning. Starting with a modest contribution and increasing it by a fixed percentage every year can deliver substantial long-term results. For instance, someone who begins investing at the age of 35 has a 25-year horizon to accumulate the target amount. Assuming an annual return of 12%, one can start with a monthly SIP of ₹12,000 (with a 10% annual step-up) to reach ₹5 crore in 25 years. A 10% step-up SIP means increasing the monthly SIP amount by 10% every year. If the investment horizon is longer—say 30 years—one can start with a SIP of just ₹6,200 (with a 10% step-up) to reach a retirement corpus of ₹5 crore at an average 12% return. Delaying retirement planning often leads to a heavier investment burden later in life, as catching up would require more aggressive contributions.

### Portfolio allocation: Balancing growth & stability

A suggested allocation mix could include large-cap, mid-cap, and small-cap equity mutual funds to maintain a balanced, growth-oriented portfolio. "Equity mutual funds—especially Flexi-cap funds—should be the foundation of long-term wealth creation," says Ajay Kumar Yadav, Group CEO and CIO at Wise Finserv (Private Wealth). "These funds empower fund managers to dynamically allocate across large-cap, mid-cap, and small-cap stocks based on valuations and macro fundamentals," he adds.

Investors may also consider balanced or multi-cap funds, which offer automatic rebalancing and diversification. Balanced funds typically follow a 70:30 equity-to-debt allocation, offering stability along with growth potential. Multi-cap funds, while more volatile, can generate higher returns in a rising market. A slightly more aggressive portfolio might consist of two multi-cap funds—one with a mid-cap focus and another with a small-cap focus—offering higher returns over the long term.

IN CONVERSATION

ALOKE BAJPAI
*Co-founder and Group CEO of ixigo*

# 'We will continue to grow faster than the competition'

THE domestic tourism industry has faced significant shifts in recent weeks, particularly after the unfortunate terror attack in Kashmir, which disrupted travel momentum in the region. In an interaction with TNIE's **Arshad Khan**, **Aloke Bajpai,** co-founder and Group CEO of ixigo, shares insights on how the incident impacted bookings, evolving traveller preferences and how ixigo's unique growth strategy allows them to grow faster than peers. Additionally, Bajpai weighs in on rising hotel prices and this season's hottest travel trends. Edited excerpts:

**How has the domestic tourism industry changed in the last one month (since the unfortunate attack in Kashmir)?**
The Pahalgam terror attacks happened at a time when Jammu and Kashmir was seeing a 70% YoY growth in bookings for us in the month of April. The attacks marked a significant blow to the state's tourism momentum and the region's security environment. At ixigo, our first priority was to ensure the safety and well-being of our travellers. The temporary shutdown of 32 airports resulted in a marginal disruption to flight services, with cancellations affecting 5-8% of the total scheduled flights between May 7 and May 12. While there wasn't much impact on the trains business, our bus business actually saw some increase in demand during this time and hence we did not see much impact at an overall level.

**What has been the impact of Pakistan airspace closure, and a call for boycott against Turkey and Azerbaijan?**
Traveller sentiment towards these two countries has clearly shifted, and it's showing up in this summer's booking trends. Internationally, bookings & searches to Japan, Korea, Spain, Paris, Italy, and Singapore are up 20–25% year-on-year, reflecting a growing appetite for global travel. Interestingly, Japan and Korea weren't major blips on the radar last summer, but this year they've emerged as trending hotspots—signaling a clear shift in traveller preferences and a growing appetite for culturally rich, long-haul experiences.

**Compared to our competitors, our growth velocity is significantly higher—nearly 3x in some cases—allowing us to steadily gain market share.**

**ixigo is everywhere - from trains, flights and buses to hotels. What is driving ixigo's growth and where does future growth opportunity lie?**
If you look at our business strategy, we made a conscious decision to focus on what we call the Next Billion Users. In India, trains are by far the most dominant mode of transport. While flights cater to just about 4–4.5% of the population, trains carry around 22 million passengers daily. That's why we didn't follow the typical Western OTA model, which puts flights at the core and builds hotels and other services around them. In India, that model doesn't scale the same way. Instead, we've flipped the template and built around the dominant travel behaviour of Indian users—ground transportation first, everything else layered on top. Thanks to this strategy, we've been consistently growing faster than the market. In Q3 alone, we grew our gross transaction value (GTV) by 48%, clocking over ₹4,000 crore in ticket sales. Flights, in fact, were our fastest-growing vertical, with a 73% GTV growth. In the train travel segment, we're already the largest OTA, holding over 58% market share as of Q3. Compared to our competitors, our growth velocity is significantly higher—nearly 3x in some cases—allowing us to steadily gain market share in these categories as well.

**It seems India is going big on spiritual tourism, especially during the Maha Kumbh period. What sort of growth have you seen here?**
If I look at Varanasi, Gaya, Shirdi, Haridwar, Puri, Ayodhya, Katra, I can say we are seeing 66% YoY growth on average. If you look at the numbers, Varanasi now receives 4–5 times the footfalls of Goa annually. And what's interesting is that a large portion of this demand is coming from Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns. We're seeing strong interest in what has become a popular spiritual travel circuit that includes Varanasi, Ayodhya, and Prayagraj.

MONEY-WISE

# MISTAKES RETIREES SHOULD AVOID

FINANCIAL ADVICE

**PV SUBRAMANYAM**
*writes at www.subramoney.com and has authored the best seller 'Retire Rich - Invest ₹40 a day'*

MANY people retire each day with dreams of the future. Unfortunately, many retirees may encounter hardships that could have been avoided.

No one can predict your future health conditions, financial markets, tax rates and so forth. But, with a plan, you can avoid some of the following problems:

- **Retiring much later than they could have**

One of the common mistakes is the belief that one must work until a specific age or accumulate a certain amount of savings. Much of this is rooted in oversimplified financial planning. I recommend individuals to work with a retirement professional who can help them run their numbers and create a retirement plan while providing guidance on how to navigate the complexities of retirement and beyond.

- **Boredom is a big killer**

Husband and wife may not die together. So, one has to be prepared for a long, lonely life. Many individuals underestimate the void that retirement and bereavement can create in their lives. Build good relationships with fellow runners, cyclists, musicians, schoolmates, college friends, etc.

- **Lack of purpose**

Everyone needs a purpose in life. Whether it is to pursue hobbies, start a new business or learn a new language, or devote your time to a meaningful cause, having a sense of purpose will keep you motivated and positive.

- **What if I run out of money?**

The fear of finishing all your money makes people live in fear. This can create unnecessary budget constraints and concerns. Building a retirement plan that gives you the confidence to enjoy your early retirement years while you're still energetic and healthy should be the goal.

- **Worrying too much about market mayhem**

If you use the 'Bucket theory' for withdrawing money for your day-to-day expenses any mayhem in the market should not worry you too much.
Buying annuities say 3 times – once at 67, once at 77 and once at 85 may be a good idea.

- **Medical-related financial hardships**

Medical and health care costs could be much higher than anticipated in retirement planning. The spouse handling the money may have to take sub-optimal decisions!

- **Making a Will and managing legacies**

Communicating well with your children -over and above making your will – and explaining it to the family is a great way to keep the family together.

- **Don't obsess with saving tax**

The tax limit is ₹12L -which means that a couple having expenses of less than ₹24L can technically be comfortable and tax free! Still, knowing tax planning is useful, do it well.

- **Supporting capable children**

Just like they say on airplanes, "If your oxygen mask is deployed, wear yours before you help others". Ditto for your kids. Prioritize your own financial well-being before offering support to your children.
Start early, go to a planner, and have a great time.

MONEY MATTERS

# WHY OUR COUNTRY FACES GROWTH HEADWINDS

FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE

**RAJAS KELKAR**
*(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)*

THERE is no doubt that the long-term story of India is attractive. Over the next few decades, there are things successive governments will do right, and there will be things that they may not get right. As an investor and saver, you must keep yourself updated. The annual report of the Reserve Bank of India is one such document you must read. It is not just about the nation's business. It matters because it gives a perspective about your money, deposits and investments.

Last year, the annual report mentioned the word 'inflation' 300 times. This year, it has gone down to 251 times. Similarly, the word 'growth' was mentioned 198 times last year. This year, it is mentioned 273 times. It may be simplistic to explain that RBI is concerned about growth. That could mean that the central bank's monetary policy committee could focus on stimulating economic growth in the year ahead and not worry too much about inflation. It simply means that borrowing rates will likely trend down in the year ahead.

India reported better-than-expected GDP growth for the quarter to March 2025. The RBI attributes the promising growth outlook for 2025-26 to a revival in the consumption demand. That is related to goods and services we buy at home or in offices. While there is no significant jump in capital expenditure for 2025-26, the government will likely maintain it at a similar level for 2025-26. That means infrastructure spending will continue to remain a focus.

The government finances remain strong, with the fiscal deficit declining and marketing borrowing in check. These factors influence the future of interest rates. If the government borrows more to meet expenditures, it has an inflationary impact. However, interest rates will not be affected since the fiscal deficit and market borrowing are in check.

There is a lot of optimism emanating out of the bond markets. Foreigners have been buying Indian government bonds due to low interest rates in the US and Europe and high interest rates in India. That buying will likely push yields down further as India's government bonds are now in major benchmark bond indices. The trend in the oil market also shows that international prices are going down. That is good news for India as it imports over 80% of the oil demand.

EXPRESS ILLUSTRATION

Despite such a strong performance and good news, many things are beyond India's control. The headwinds primarily come from such factors. The RBI annual report flags uncertainty about global trade post-protectionist measures, geopolitical tensions and global financial market volatility as downside risks to the growth outlook and upside risks to the inflation outlook. For financial markets, the United States economy was a haven. US President Trump is shaking that belief with his trade policies. He is hurting friends and foes alike with tariffs. The global supply chain system is set to witness significant disruption. A section of credit rating agencies have stripped America of its haven status by downgrading the sovereign credit rating.

Gold prices remain high, and crypto assets are favouring traditional 'haven' treasury bonds. That shows a lot of fear in the global financial market system. The RBI annual report and the monetary policy documents that the RBI publishes once every two months give you a big-picture perspective on interest rates and economic growth.

The outlook for economic growth and inflation matter to your money more than anything that has already happened. If you track that regularly, you can make appropriate asset allocation. Your financial advisor may recommend holding more cash and gold than high-risk equity assets. The RBI documents, like the annual and monetary policy reports, can help you understand the latest trends and help with talking points for a meaningful conversation with your financial advisor.

# Reliance Infra eyes ₹3k cr defence exports in 2 years

PTI @ New Delhi

RELIANCE Infrastructure Ltd, the flagship company of Anil Ambani's Reliance Group, is targeting ₹3,000 crore from the export of 155 mm ammunition and aggregates by the end of financial year 2027, sources said. In the current year itself, the company is estimated to export ₹ 1,500 crore of large calibre ammunition.

Reliance Infrastructure has already clocked exports of up to ₹100 crore of artillery ammunition and aggregates and is aiming to be among the top three exporters of defence equipment in India, sources aware of the matter said. The key export market for Reliance includes countries in the European Union, focusing on large restocking demand for artillery ammunition. According to the experts, the market size for restocking is estimated at ₹4,00,000 crore. Sources said Reliance has been able to make inroads in the highly competitive markets of the European Union and South East Asia.

When contacted, a Reliance Infrastructure spokesperson confirmed that the ammunition export is the key priority of the company as it develops Dhirubhai Ambani Defence City (DADC) in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, with a capital outlay of ₹5,000 crore. The company has been allotted 1,000 acres of land in Watad Industrial Area of Ratnagiri, Maharashtra to develop DADC.

# IndiGo places order for additional 30 Airbus A350

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

INDIA'S largest carrier - IndiGo - on Sunday announced signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Airbus to enlarge its wide-body aircraft order by converting 30 aircraft of its purchase rights for 70 aircraft into a firm order. Last year in April 2024, IndiGo placed a firm order for 30 A350-900 aircraft, with purchase rights for an additional 70 aircraft. The original order's deliveries are expected to start in 2027.

IndiGo's move to induct wide-body aircraft aligns with its ambitious global expansion strategy, including plans to launch long-haul flights. With over 430 aircraft and a dominant 62% share in India's domestic market, the airline aims to transform into a major international player. Currently, the long-haul segment to and from India is largely controlled by foreign carriers like Emirates and Qatar Airways. Among Indian airlines, only Tata Group's Air India operates such flights — a gap IndiGo now seeks to fill. "This strategic move will enable IndiGo to spread its wings further and expand its long-haul international network, connecting Indian metros to different parts of the world. With this, it will create more travel options for its customers to new international destinations and also enable more flights to the hubs of its partner airlines," the airline said. In March 2025, IndiGo began preparing for its long-haul operations with the introduction of six temporarily leased wide-body Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft, deliveries of which will be concluded by 2026. IndiGo's Airbus A350-900 aircraft will be powered by Rolls Royce's Trent XWB engine. In June 2023, IndiGo had placed the largest-ever single aircraft order by any airline for 500 aircraft with Airbus.

# ...to expand global footprint with two foreign airlines

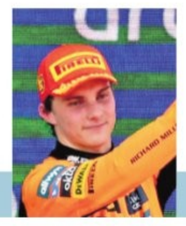
ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

INDIGO on Sunday expanded its partnership with two foreign airlines - Air France-KLM and Virgin Atlantic. It also signed an agreement with American carrier - Delta Air Lines - to expand its long-haul services to North America, Europe and Britain.

"This announcement not only expands our relationship with Air France–KLM and Virgin Atlantic but also marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter as we welcome Delta Airlines as a valued partner. We are particularly excited to start our long-haul expansion from this Summer and connect with our partners' networks to provide greater access to Europe and North America," said Pieter Elbers, CEO of IndiGo.

IndiGo, which recently announced adding 10 new international destinations in FY26, has long relied on codeshare agreements to expand its global reach. With its newest partnership getting finalized after regulatory approvals, the airline will soon offer flights under its own brand on partner-operated routes from India, including connections via Amsterdam and Manchester to key destinations in Europe and North America.

## *Spanish GP: Piastri topper as Mclaren finish 1-2*



Oscar Piastri drove with exemplary calm and control in a torrid race on Sunday to beat teammate Lando Norris as McLaren claimed their first Spanish Grand Prix victory since 2005 with a resounding 1-2 triumph. With his fifth win this year, Piastri extended his lead over Norris in the drivers' championship to 10 points with Ferrari's Charles Leclerc finishing third.



# Rise & rise of RCB captain Patidar

Having led MP to SMAT final, he now has a chance to go one better at the biggest stage

**GOMESH S** @ Ahmedabad

AS Rajat Patidar got down on one knee and smashed Musheer Khan into the New PCA Stadium stands, leading Royal Challengers Bengaluru into the 2025 IPL final, he had become a part of an elite club of captains to achieve the feat. Patidar joined Anil Kumble, Daniel Vettori and Virat Kohli — they are the ones to have led RCB to previous IPL finals — in taking the franchise with a massive fan base to their fourth summit clash in 18 years.

> *It was all his hard work. He didn't need to study, he didn't need to take care of the house. He was free from the beginning. I didn't give him any load. He was born to play cricket.* — Manohar Patidar, Rajat's father

At this point, it is well established that RCB Director Mo Bobat asked Patidar whether he would be interested in taking the leadership role and from coming back into the team as an injury replacement in 2022 to leading the franchise to the 2025 IPL final, he has had a meteoric rise. And so is the fact that he was all set to get married during the IPL season before being called in as an injury replacement for Luvnith Sisodia.

However, it wasn't the first time Patidar was asked if he wanted to be captain. In fact, when the Madhya Pradesh Cricket Association and head coach Chandrakant Pandit offered Patidar the Ranji captaincy four years ago, he wished to focus on his performance. "Initially, when we offered Ranji captaincy, Chandu sir asked him, and he was reluctant. He said, 'No, I want to concentrate on my batting'," MPCA secretary Sanjeev Rao recalls.

And he did concentrate on his batting. Patidar had two stellar seasons with the bat, averaging over 80 in red-ball cricket during the 2021-22 and 2022 seasons. In the season after, he went on to accumulate 884 runs and soon reaped the rewards with an India call-up. After two seasons with RCB, he made his ODI debut in 2023 and then played Test cricket for India next year.

With all the experience and exposure he had since the captaincy offer when Pandit took over as head coach, when Bobat asked the question, Patidar wanted to give it a go in domestic cricket. He went to MPCA and Pandit and asked if he could lead the white-ball sides. "He volunteered himself this year in the Mushtaq Ali Trophy, 'Chandu sir, I'll lead the team.' He said, 'Since Shubham Sharma was our Ranji captain, and he is doing well, he shouldn't be disturbed.' When Chandu sir offered him T20 captaincy, he readily accepted," says Rao.

As fate would have it, things fell into place for Patidar and MP. He led the state side to the final of the domestic T20 tournament — the knockouts were played in Bengaluru. Patidar smashed 428 runs at 61.14 average and 186.08 strike rate, taking the team to the summit clash. However, they fell short in the final hurdle against the Shreyas Iyer-led Mumbai. During these knockout games, Patidar and Bobat spent a lot of time talking about captaincy and his leadership. Bobat, too, gave him confidence that he could succeed as captain.

Cut to present, Patidar has become the captain who led RCB to their fourth IPL final. The road to this point was not easy; he had injury concerns, played a couple of games as just an impact player, but when the playoffs came, Patidar brought his best with bowling changes and captaincy. His numbers — 286 runs at 23.83 average and 142.28 strike rate — might not be as good as his teammates, but Patidar, the captain, has only gotten better as the tournament progressed.

Understandably, much like the millions of RCB fans, Patidar's father Manohar, too, is a happy man. For Manohar, it had always been about supporting Patidar's dream of playing cricket. Whether it was when he started with aspirations of becoming a pacer or switching to spin before eventually becoming a batter, Manohar and his family were behind Patidar, doing what they could. "It was all his hard work. He didn't need to study, he didn't need to take care of the house. He was free from the beginning. I didn't give him any load. He was born to play cricket. When I didn't force him, he used to do what he wanted," Manohar told this daily.

While Patidar's career has grown tremendously in the last few years, not much has changed in the Patidar household. They have always been proud of him, and they still are. "We are very proud, it feels very good. It is a big deal becoming the captain of RCB," says Manohar. Becoming captain was just the first of many right steps Patidar has taken over the past few months.

Come Tuesday, he has a chance at making history — becoming the first male captain to win a trophy for Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Watching him on TV, hoping that he makes it happen, would be millions of RCB fans and his father Manohar. Will he? Time will tell.

# Shreyas plays captain's innings to power Punjab Kings to final

**GOMESH S** @ Ahmedabad

Punjab Kings' Nehal Wadhera (R) and Shreyas Iyer take a run on Sunday | AP

FOR a couple of hours, it felt like the clock had turned back to 2023. The Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad hosted the 2023 Indian Premier League final between Chennai Super Kings and Gujarat Titans. An unexpected storm led to heavy showers. The summit clash went into the reserve day, which too saw significant rain. By the time the winners were decided in a last-ball thriller (reduced match), the T20 game, which started on Sunday, had entered Tuesday.

So, when play was delayed after Punjab Kings won the toss and opted to bowl against Mumbai Indians in Qualifier 2 on Sunday, the 2023 final would have flashed in front of everyone's eyes at the venue. After a delay of about two hours and fifteen minutes, the contest finally began at 9.45 PM with no loss of overs.

The persistent drizzle meant the outfield was damp and slow, and so was the pitch. All it took was a couple of overs for Punjab Kings' pacers to roll their arms over. Rohit Sharma, who was earlier dropped at third man by Azmatullah Omarzai, hit Marcus Stoinis straight to the fielder in deep. His partner, Jonny Bairstow, did not spare even the marginally fuller deliveries, but struggled with back-of-length slower balls. Arshdeep Singh, Kyle Jamieson, and Vyshak Vijaykumar all resorted to knuckle balls, cutters, and soon Bairstow tried to scoop the Karnataka pacer, only to be caught by the keeper. Even as they tried to take the pace off, every time the ball was on length or pitched up, Tilak Varma punished them. Suryakumar Yadav brought out the sweeps against Yuzvendra Chahal as Mumbai ensured the run-rate did not drop below ten.

At least a boundary or two came every over as MI raced to 131/2 after 13 overs. Yadav had crossed the 700-run mark (overall), and Varma, too, was hitting at a good strike rate. Yadav took Chahal downtown with the spinner trying to toss it up, and when he pulled the length back, the Mumbaikar brought out the sweep. He eventually was caught in the deep for 44 off 26 balls. Jamieson took it upon himself to deliver a four-run over, including the wicket of Varma. Vyshak followed it up with another good over, where it seemed like he only gave away six runs. But an unnecessary overthrow went for four, and that was the turning point. From 156/4, Naman Dhir picked up three boundaries of Arshdeep — two of them top-edges — and Hardik Pandya took on Omarzai as MI's run-rate went back to ten RPO. Mumbai hit 47 runs in the last four overs, finishing with 203/6 on board. In reply, Punjab lost in-form Prabhsimran Singh early on and they were further reduced to 72 for 3 when the dangerous Josh Inglis was sent back. Captain Shreyas Iyer (87 n.o off 41) and Nehal Wadhera then steadied the ship to keep Punjab in hunt. Just when it seemed like the duo would take the game away from Mumbai, the latter was dsimissed. Despite Wadhera's dismissal, Punjab were 156/4 after 15.4 overs, well within range to reach of the target. Shashank Singh, Wadhera's replacement, was run out soon. However, Shreyas virtually killed off the contest with four sixes in the 19th over.

**Brief scores:** MI (203/6) in 20 ovs (Varma 44, Yadav 44) **lost to** PBKS 207/5 in 18 ovs (Wadhera 48, Shreyas 87 n.o).

# Chess prodigy Charvi's single-minded focus to master craft

**SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN**
@ Stavanger

VISWANATHAN Anand likened her to a 'star'. Swayams Mishra, a popular Indian coach, called her 'very talented'. The '64 Squares Initiative' are part funding her every move across the globe. Group E4, an Anand-backed campaign where Indian families from around the world support young chess players, funds her drive to the top.

Meet Charvi A, a 11-year-old who's already marrying off-the-board dedication with on-the-board precision. An age-group world champion, Charvi, currently featuring at the Norway Open tournament in the city, is showing an unnatural appetite for elite-level competition now. Her clarity of thought is so clear she only goes to school for her mid-term and annual exams. She's also secretive about who her current coach is. Rated 2056 in Classical, the WFM (Women FIDE Master) has a laundry list of accomplishments to her name. In fact, in 2024 she was bestowed with the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar by President Droupadi Murmu (India's highest civilian award given to children). Behind Charvi's rise is the tale of a mother's sacrifice, parents' willingness to allow their only child to specialise in chess at such a young age and chess' finest in the country joining hands to fuel the dream of an individual.

**Gukesh records first OTB Classical win over Carlsen**

D Gukesh engineered a sensational win over Magnus Carlsen in Round 6 of the Norway Chess on Sunday. The Indian world champion, who was completely lost when the endgame began, kept fighting, kept at it, surviving one more move. When Carlsen was poised to strike with some checkmating nets, Carlsen made a blunder. Gukesh found his initiative. That's when the Norwegian knew he had made a mistake. So, he banged the table and sent the pieces flying all over before resigning. This is the 19-year-old's first over-the-board Classical win over the 34-year-old.

The Bengaluru-based Charvi picked up chess as a five-year-old at a day-care centre. She started badgering her chess agnostic parents about how the game worked. For a period of time, Akhila and Anil Kumar turned to *YouTube* to understand the game — both of them didn't even know the pieces moved — to keep pace with their daughter. She soon outgrew both her parents. That's when they realised the need for proper coaching.

The parents took the help of Mishra, whose guidance helped

Akhila with Charvi in Stavanger | SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the women's team win gold at the Olympiad in 2024. However, because Mishra wasn't able to give his undivided attention, the parents decided to appoint another coach, whose identity Akhila refused to reveal. "I'm not too sure if I can reveal the name of her current coach," her mother said (RB Ramesh and wife, Aarthie, have also worked with her previously). This level of secrecy is common at the top-end but it is rare at this level. It's one of the many things that stood out during and after the interaction with Akhila, who had to give up her a day job in an IT company to be able to travel to events with Charvi. Inside the playing hall, Charvi was all focussed. Outside, Akhila wore the all too familiar expression of an Indian parent outside an exam hall. "I don't really understand the game," she said. "I don't even ask her how the results went, I can just make it from her body language and expression when she walks out."

One moment after Saturday's match was enough to capture the attention Charvi pays to her craft. As soon as her game finished, she walked up to her mother for a cursory greeting. Post that, she scooted off to meet her opponent to talk about the match in a more relaxed environment.

**Full story: newindianexpress.com**

**OLYMPIC ASPIRATIONS**

The structure of Olympic ring outside the Sardar Vallabhai Patel International Airport in Ahmedabad. India have expressed interest in hosting the 2036 edition of the Summer Games, with the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) submitting a letter of intent to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) last year | EXPRESS

# Mukesh strikes thrice against England Lions

**AGENCIES** @ Canterbury

SHARDUL Thakur and Nitish Kumar Reddy, fighting for the lone seamer all-rounder's slot in the Test team were poor against a dogged England Lions batting unit that ended the third day's play at 527 for 7. Seamer Mukesh Kumar's (3/75 in 21 overs) morning spell with the old Dukes was the only highlight in an otherwise mediocre bowling effort from India here on Sunday.

Mukesh did pitch the ball in right areas and got enough bounce and a bit of seam movement to dismiss Holden, James Rew (8) and Rehan Ahmed (3) in quick succession during the pre-lunch session.

Between Shardul (1/90 in 21 overs) and Reddy (0/57 in 11 overs), they bowled 32 overs with the former getting an extended spell but not for once did it seem that they were in a position to trouble a stodgy Tom Haines (171) or a gutsy Dan Mousley (113), who got his maiden first-class hundred. Abhimanyu Easwaran's men will hope to end Day 4 positively.

**Brief Scores:** India A 557 vs England Lions 527/7 in 124 ovs (Haines 171, Holden 101, Mousley 113, Mukesh Kumar 3/75).

Poland's Iga Swiatek hits a return against Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina | AP

# Top guns Alcaraz and Swiatek enter quarters

**AGENCIES** @ Paris

CARLOS Alcaraz fought past American Ben Shelton in a tight four-set match to reach the French Open quarterfinals on Sunday, while Iga Swiatek staged a comeback to defeat Elena Rybakina and keep her bid for a fourth straight title alive.

Reigning champion Alcaraz clinched a 7-6 (8), 6-3, 4-6, 6-4 victory after three hours and 19 minutes on Court Philippe Chatrier to book a last-eight berth for a fourth straight year. Alcaraz will take on Tommy Paul in the quarterfinals, after the 12th seed saw off Australia's Alexei Popyrin 6-3, 6-3, 6-3.

Four-time Roland Garros champion Swiatek, who has been struggling for her best form and has not reached a final since winning the title last year, was in serious trouble when trailing 2-0 to Rybakina in the second set. But the 24-year-old dug deep to clinch a 1-6, 6-3, 7-5 victory.

**Bopanna knocked out**

India's Rohan Bopanna and his partner Adam Pavlasek fought tooth and nail before being knocked out of the event by second seeds Harri Heliovaara and Henry Patten. The unseeded Indo-Czech pair lost 2-6 6- 7 (5) in the pre-quarterfinals.

**EXPRESS READ**

**Akshay slips to joint 23rd, Scheffler climbs to top spot**

DUBLIN: Akshay Bhatia slipped down the leaderboard with two double bogeys on the moving day at the Memorial, as World No 1 Scottie Scheffler posted 4-under 68 that took him to the top. Bhatia slipped with an 8-over 80 that saw him drop to T-23, down 20 places from his overnight third place.

**Boxers Deepak & Naman claim gold in Thailand Open 2025**

BANGKOK: Deepak and Naman Tanwar won gold medals in their respective categories as Indian boxers ended their campaign at the Thailand Open 2025 with eight medals. Deepak (75kg) beat Abdurakhimov Javokhir of Uzbekistan while Naman got the better of China's Han Xuezhen 4:1 in the 90kg final.

**UTT 6: Reeth and Anirban shine to help PGB Pune post win**

AHMEDABAD: India's Reeth Rishya Tennison and Anirban Ghosh starred as PBG Pune Jaguars fought back to beat Maharashtra rivals U Mumba TT 9-6 in the Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) Season 6 on Sunday. With the season now underway, all ties will be broadcast on Star Sports Network.

# *PSG's 5-star show to join European royalty*

**AGENCIES** @ Munich

PARIS Saint-Germain, Champions League winner.

At long last the club that was transformed by Qatari billions and bought and sold a succession of the world's greatest players in an extravagant bid to get to the top has got their hands on the big one.

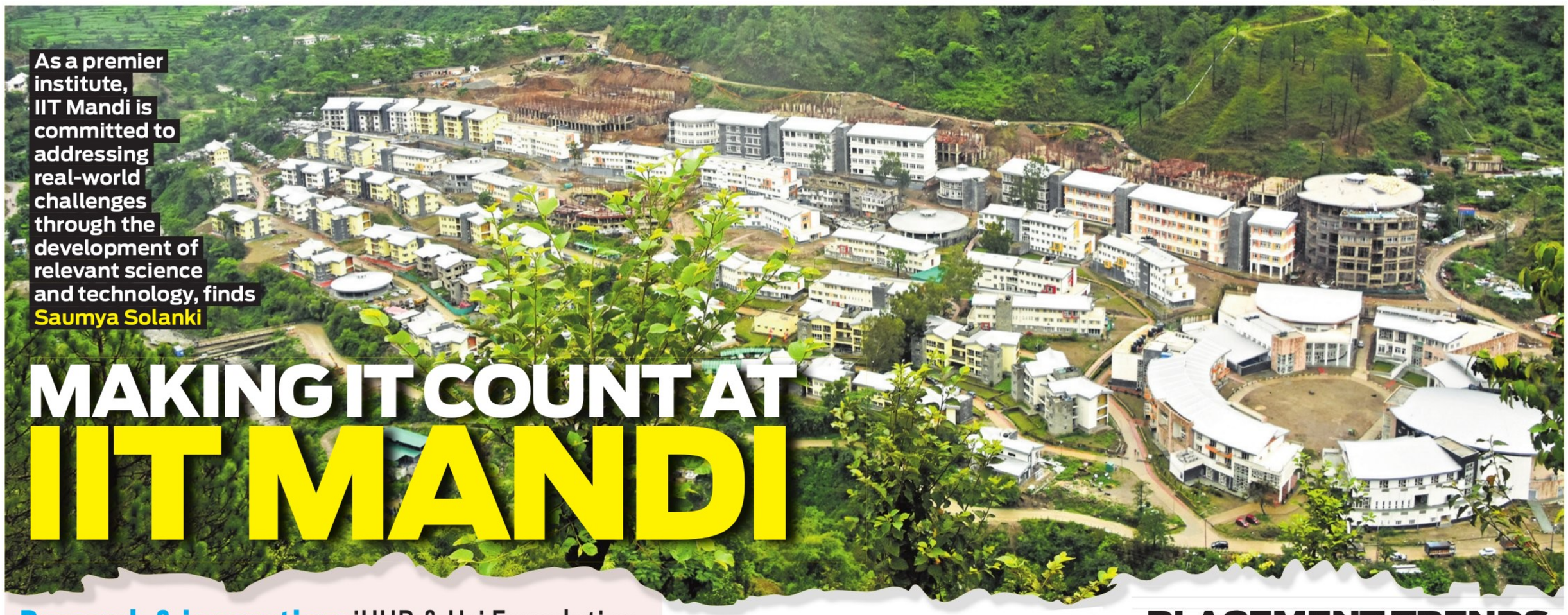
European club football's grandest prize has a new home after PSG thrashed Inter Milan 5-0 in Saturday's final in Munich. "It's in the bag, it's coming home with us to Paris tomorrow (Sunday)," coach Luis Enrique said. "My first day at the PSG campus I said the ultimate goal was to fill the trophy cabinet. The only trophy missing was the Champions League. Here we have ticked that box."

It was the trophy that not even Lionel Messi, Neymar or Kylian Mbappe could deliver to the French club. Luis Enrique has achieved it after overseeing PSG's shift from the era of galactico signings to one of genuine team-building. Fitting then that Desire Doue, the 19-year-old French forward, emblematic of the club's new generation, was the chief inspiration and player of the match as PSG recorded the biggest win in a final in the competition's 70-year history. In a scintillating performance, Doué scored two goals and set up another goal in little over an hour on the field before being substituted. "It is wonderful, it is magical, we are rewriting the history of this club and French football," he said. Achraf Hakimi, Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and substitute Senny Mayulu all scored around Doue's double in a game in which PSG could have run out an even bigger winner. "It's exceptional," striker Ousmane Dembele said. "It's especially good since we did it in style."

PSG players lift the Champions League Trophy on Saturday | AP

Now PSG can truly sit alongside the royalty of European football. Not by virtue of turnover or merchandising but on the merits of their achievements on the field.

The Champions League is the ultimate barometer of the continent's elite clubs and up until Saturday, PSG had been a flashy contender that always came up short



As a premier institute, IIT Mandi is committed to addressing real-world challenges through the development of relevant science and technology, finds **Saumya Solanki**

# MAKING IT COUNT AT IIT MANDI

## Research & innovation: iHUB & Hci Foundation

**ABOUT IIT MANDI IHUB AND HCI FOUNDATION**

IIT Mandi iHub and HCi Foundation (iHub) is a Section 8 company established under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS). The technology mission of IIT Mandi iHub is Human-Computer Interaction (HCi), which aims to bring technology into harmony with human needs.

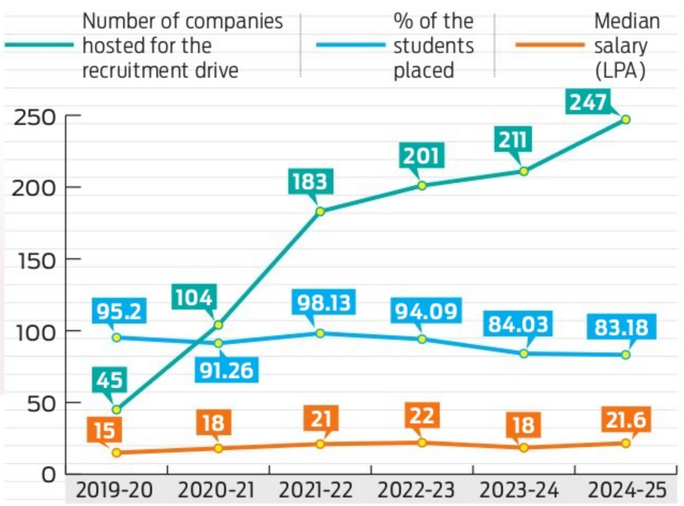
**IIT MANDI CATALYST**

IIT Mandi Catalyst, the first technology business incubator in Himachal Pradesh, stands at the forefront of innovation and entrepreneurship in the Himalayan region. Since its inception, it has supported over 550 start-ups, with a strong focus on early-stage ideas and student-led ventures.

at the peak

Currently, IIT Mandi has 3,300+ students and 200+ faculty members. The institute's motto is 'Scaling the Heights', which motivates one and all to give their best to any task

## PLACEMENT TRENDS AND CHALLENGES




₹65 LPA Highest | ₹21.46 LPA Average | ₹17 LPA Median

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

**Government services**

**KSHITIZ SARASWAT**
BTech, Mechanical Engineering, Batch of 2015
Serving in Indian Air Force

**Industry**

**DR SANJAY RATHEE**
PhD, Computer Science and Engineering, Batch of 2018
Senior Scientist, Astra Zeneca, United Kingdom

**Entrepreneurship**

**MRINAL TYAGI**
BTech, Computer Science and Engineering, Batch of 2022
Walmart Global Tech & Co-founder of HeyDoc

**Academics**

**DR MANOJ KUMAR**
PhD, Mathematics, Batch of 2023
Indian Institute of Technology, Madras

**SUDHANSHU GANGWAR**
MTech, Mechanical Engineering, Batch of 2023
University of Nottingham, United Kingdom

# "Joining IIT Mandi for your career enhancement will be your best decision"

The scenic location of IIT Mandi goes a long way in boosting the potential that the institute holds. IIT Mandi's Director talks about this and a lot more

**LAXMIDHAR BEHERA,**
Director, IIT Mandi takes us through the journey of how the IIT came to become what it is today

*We need to recognise the strength of Indian Knowledge System (IKS) in guiding the current research towards a greater goal of harmonious existence. IKS teaches us the higher purpose of life and how we can dedicate ourselves to a bigger societal cause*

**● IIT Mandi has completed 15 years. Tell us about two milestones that have shaped the institute.**

According to me. two such milestones are the research facilities and the vision that we have created.

The first unique research facility is that of the Advanced Materials Research Centre (AMRC). This facility has high-end modern equipment required for material characterisation like Raman spectroscopy, SEM, TEM, etc.

The semiconductor fabrication facility is another unique one where we can fabricate devices of the size of a few nanometres in scale of three to seven nanometres. IIT Mandi's second milestone is the establishment of four centres promoting interdisciplinary research.

**● Tell us about the advantages that the location of IIT Mandi offers.**

IIT Mandi houses some of the best world-class facilities and labs conducive for carrying out cutting-edge research. In addition, the Himalayas provide unlimited opportunities for sightseeing, trekking, cycling, and many more activities. The local people here are very sweet. You will have the opportunity to understand the local problems and find solutions.

**● What values does the IIT instil in its students that helps them stand out?**

At IIT Mandi, we encourage students to go for research and higher studies, so that they can fundamentally contribute to the cause of science and technology. Second, we started Young Innovative Fellowship (YIF) for students to encourage them to become job creators, and not job seekers.

**● What's next for the institute?**

With the help of Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) funds we are developing infrastructure that can accommodate 5,000 students and 350+ faculty members by 2027.

We are more conscious of looking at problems that really concern our people, for example, in the fields of agriculture, health care, and environment. So, these are the kind of problems IIT Mandi would like to look forward to solving.

**● Where do you see India in 2050 and what role do you see IIT Mandi playing towards the same vision?**

I would like to see India as a developed nation in 2047 with many strengthened fundamentals in the fields of food security and safety, health-care, clean environment and spiritual connectedness. As a premier institute, IIT Mandi is committed to addressing some of these problems through the development of relevant science and technology.

## STUDENTS' VOICES

**Riya (MTech, 2025)**
IIT Mandi is not just an institution — it's a sanctuary for learning. The mentorship here is transformative, and the mountains constantly remind you to rise higher. Every project and idea is nurtured with care and vision.

**Soumyadeep Khan (MA Development Studies, 2026)**
What I cherish most is the deep interdisciplinary atmosphere. You're not boxed into your subject — you are encouraged to traverse fields, ask uncomfortable questions, and engage in real-world problem solving.

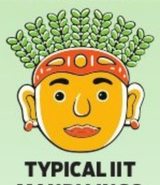
**Vaibhav Kesharwani (BTech CSE, fourth year)**
The best part about IIT Mandi is the perfect blend of learning and nature that it offers. Where else can you debug code with a view of snow-capped peaks?

## What's fun on campus

A COLOURFUL AND LIGHT-HEARTED LOOK AT THE CULTURAL VIBE OF IIT MANDI

**BEST DISH IN THE CANTEEN**
Tandoori paneer kulcha at Higher Taste Canteen. A crowd-favourite snack during late-night rehearsals & performances.

**MOST AWESOME INFORMAL TRADITION**
Themed club farewells – Bollywood night, retro, meme dress-up, and more. Farewells become unforgettable with quirky themes and heartfelt moments.



**TYPICAL IIT MANDI LINGO**
"Win karenge, win?": Meaning rehearsed yet not confident, used humourously pre-performances. Reflects the ever-optimistic spirit of cultural performers.

**BEST TIME TO BE ON CAMPUS**
Winter – when the mist dances on the hills, bonfires blaze outside hostels, and the entire valley feels like a dream painted in frost.

**BEST HANGOUT SPOT**
South Campus Sports Ground – equal parts playground and playground-of-ideas.

## Iconic Events & Traditions

**EXODIA – ANNUAL CULTURAL FEST**
The grandest cultural extravaganza of IIT Mandi and the biggest fest of the Himalayas, Exodia attracts participants from across the country. With events spanning music, dance, drama, art, literature and specials events like Cosplay, it's a three-day celebration of creativity and competition under the Kamand skies.

**IIT MANDI'S CULTURAL SOCIETY IS THE HEART OF CAMPUS CELEBRATIONS AND CREATIVITY. THESE SIGNATURE EVENTS REFLECT THE DYNAMIC, DIVERSE, AND INCLUSIVE SPIRIT OF THE STUDENT BODY**

**KALA – THE CULTURAL LEAGUE**
Kala is an intra-college competition with a unique auction-based team selection, where teams battle it out in music, theatre, dance, art, and more. With auctions, weekly showcases, and intense rivalry, it's as much about talent as it is about team spirit.

**AAKARSHAN – FRESHERS' CULTURAL NIGHT**
A special evening organised to welcome first-year students into the IIT Mandi family. Full of energetic performances, light-hearted skits, and team-building, Aakarshan is their first glimpse of the vibrant cultural life awaiting them.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS City

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MONDAY

**DAY'S DIARY**

## *New state*

On this day in 2014, Telangana was carved out as a separate state through bifurcation of combined Andhra Pradesh

**THE HISTORY**

The history of Telangana's formation dates back to 1948 when the Hyderabad state was integrated with the Union of India by ending the Nizam's rule

**INITIAL STRUGGLES**

In 1955, the recommendation of the States Reorganisation Commission suggested to retain Hyderabad as a separate State and it went unheeded

**BEGINNING AGAIN**

After leading the separate Telangana agitation for well over a decade, TRS chief K Chandrasekhar Rao assumed office as the first Chief Minister

*The latest in Bengaluru*

PG 2

MAHIMA NAGARAJU

Bollywood star Neha Dhupia, who was in the city recently, sits down with *CE* for a quick chat about returning to *Roadies*, her rivalry with co-star Prince Narula, and India's evolving podcast landscape

# 'I WANT TO BE SOMEONE WHO HAS A VOICE'

YOU may know her from 2000s comedies like *Chup Chupke* or *Singh is Kinng*, from her time as a model representing India in the Miss Universe pageant, or perhaps more recently, playing Vidya Balan's boss in 2017 hit *Tumhari Sulu* or an unabashedly sexy librarian in *Lust Stories*. Add to that her much-loved stints as a gang leader on several seasons of *Roadies* and her podcast-cum-YouTube show *No Filter Neha*, it's no stretch to call Neha Dhupia a beloved household name.

Visiting the city as the showstopper for Max Kids Festival, she reflected on this gradual shift in focus from model-actor to reality TV star and popular host, saying, "It's not a transition; in 2025, any number of mediums that you can explore – whether it's a podcast, television, fiction or non-fiction, whether it's playing characters in films – you should. After being in the business for over two decades now, I have to put myself in a box and at the same time, be out of the box. I want to be someone who has a voice and exercises it when necessary."

This confident and outspoken demeanour is evident than ever in Dhupia's return to *Roadies* for its *Roadies Double Cross* season after three years. "My biggest victory has been coming back to the show and get ting the amount of love that I have. It makes me want to keep coming back," she says, adding, "I'm always fighting for what I want to try and at no point do I want to hurt or harm anybody. The intention is always to encourage people."

Longtime fans of the show have particularly enjoyed seeing the competitive yet fond rivalry between Dhupia and Prince Narula, often resulting in fights and jabs but also moments of heartfelt support. According to Dhupia, the relationship on screen is a reflection of their off screen comfort. "Our off-screen comfort is so much that when we end up fighting on screen, we know that we can get away with a lot more than people usually can. There are some days that it's not easy to listen to the stuff that he says, and I'm sure he feels the same way about me. But then, I know he's got my back and he knows, I've got his. All the fighting and not letting the other one win has gotten us this infamous tag of 'Tom and Jerry' to live up to," she laughs.

Apart from her acting and reality show appearances, Dhupia has long been popular for her podcast *No Filter Neha*, where she brings on the who's who of Bollywood for candid conversations. Having recently wrapped the sixth season of the show, Dhupia reflects on the recent boom in podcasts, saying, "The boom has happened because people have accessibility to cameras and everybody has a voice and wants to use it...it's definitely a hit or miss." She adds, "In my case, I was just really happy there was so much love and attention paid to the podcast. I have done six seasons and had more than 70 conversations. If I have the time, I'll come back to it again because if anyone's most excited about my podcast, it's me!

PIC: ALLEN EGENUSE J

> *I'm always fighting for what I want to try and at no point do I want to hurt or harm anybody. The intention is always to encourage people*
> Neha Dhupia, actor-TV personality

**KILLING IT!**

Popular singer Anirudh Ravichander, known for hits like *Why This Kolaveri Di*, *Aaluma Doluma*, and *Hukum*, performed in the city over the weekend

# A Starry Ascent

The first Indian chef to helm a three Michelin Star restaurant, Himanshu Saini on reshaping global perceptions of Indian cuisine, and what sets his restaurant apart

ASLAM GAFOOR

*(The writer is a Bengaluru-based hospitality professional, food lover, and travel enthusiast)*

CHEF **Himanshu Saini** has carved a distinguished place in culinary history, becoming the first Indian chef to helm a restaurant – Tresind Studio in Dubai – that has been awarded the prestigious three Michelin Stars. Bestowed at the recent Michelin Guide ceremony in Dubai, this remarkable accolade cements his status as a pioneer in modern Indian gastronomy. Nestled within the elegant setting of The St. Regis Gardens at Palm Jumeirah, the intimate 20-cover restaurant is a celebration of narrative-driven, progressive Indian cuisine. Renowned for his exquisite plating, reverence for regional culinary traditions, and unwavering commitment to excellence, Chef Saini has propelled Indian fine dining onto the world stage. In this interview, he reflects on this milestone moment, the journey of his evolving culinary philosophy, and his vision for the future.

**Congratulations on this historic milestone. What does earning three Michelin stars mean to you and your team at Tresind Studio?**
Thank you – it's a deeply emotional and humbling moment for all of us. These three stars are more than just a symbol of excellence; they reflect the courage we took to challenge conventions and express our culture through food. Tresind Studio was never just a restaurant – it was a vision to reshape how Indian cuisine is perceived globally. This recognition belongs equally to my incredible team, whose dedication and passion brought this vision to life. And none of it would have been possible without Bhupender Nath, the founder and CEO of Passion F&B, whose belief in our journey has been unwavering. This accolade marks not an end, but a thrilling new beginning for us.

**What do you believe sets Tresind Studio apart for Michelin to award its highest honour?**
Indian cuisine has always been profound and multifaceted, yet often misunderstood abroad. What sets Tresind Studio apart is our intention – each course is meticulously crafted not only to please the palate but to convey a story rooted in culture. We do not aim to merely impress with technique. We seek to evoke memory, emotion, and connection through dishes that honour India's regional traditions while offering them in a refined, unexpected form. Michelin recognised the philosophy behind our food – an immersive, evolving journey, where each guest is treated as sacred. It's this marriage of storytelling and precision that, I believe, resonated most.

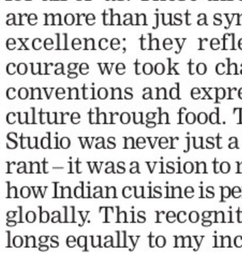
**Your cuisine has always blended storytelling and innovation. How has that evolved to lead you here?**
In the beginning, our focus was to share stories of ingredients, landscapes, and local traditions – translated onto a plate. Progressive Indian cuisine, for me, has always meant evolution rather than reinvention. Over time, our storytelling has become more layered and purposeful. The technique is more sophisticated, and the narratives are more emotionally resonant. We constantly challenge ourselves to elevate, to remain honest and expressive. The heart, however, remains unchanged: a profound respect for Indian cuisine and its rightful place on the world's most revered tables.

**How do you maintain a balance between tradition and innovation?**
It begins with reverence. When you respect your roots, innovation becomes a natural progression rather than a disruption. At Tresind Studio, we reinterpret rather than replace. A street food dish may appear as a delicate tasting course; a forgotten spice may be brought back into prominence. Our innovation stems from a place of authenticity – not rebellion. That's the essence of our philosophy: to celebrate tradition while dreaming with courage.

**What message would you offer to aspiring Indian chefs around the world?**
Embrace your heritage – it is your greatest strength. For years, we sought validation from abroad. But today, Indian cuisine is being recognised for the richness we've always known it to possess. To the next generation: be proud, but be curious. Challenge norms, explore fearlessly, and remain rooted. Let your food reflect who you are. When your voice is genuine, the recognition will come. This moment isn't just ours – it's a collective victory for every Indian chef daring to reimagine our culinary legacy.

**How has Dubai influenced your journey and Tresind Studio's rise?**
Dubai has been both our canvas and our catalyst. Its cosmopolitan spirit gave us the freedom to be bold, to innovate, and to cook for a global audience daily. This diversity constantly sharpens our approach and broadens our vision. The city's openness to new ideas, and its respect for cultural storytelling, made it the perfect home for Tresind Studio. Our concept simply could not have taken shape anywhere else.

**Finally, what's next for you and Tresind Studio after this landmark recognition?**
While this is a moment to celebrate, our focus is on the road ahead. The challenge now is to raise the bar further – to delve deeper into emotion, refinement, and discovery. There are still untold stories across India's culinary landscape – forgotten techniques, regional gems, unexplored ingredients. Tresind Studio will remain our creative core, but we're also considering how to share this philosophy more widely – through new cities, new ideas, and new platforms. Whatever we do next, it will remain rooted in our purpose: to honour our Indian cuisine with authenticity, precision, and heart.



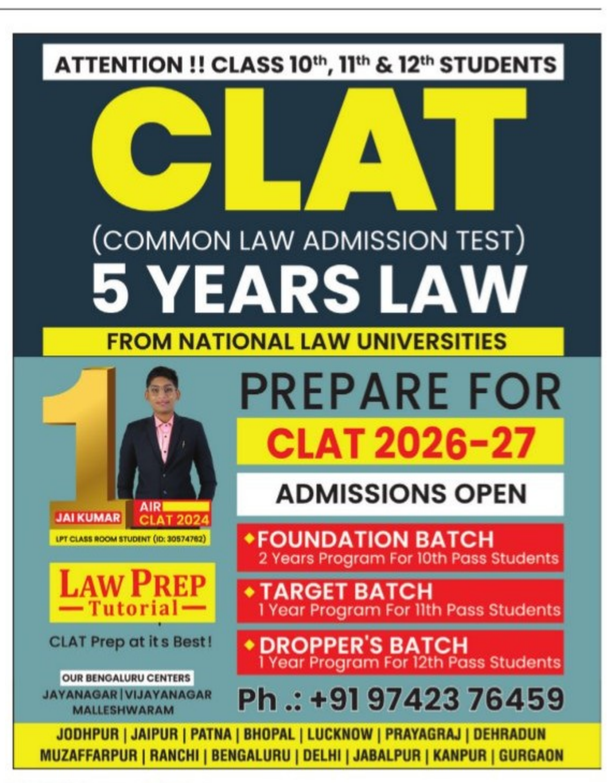
## CITY READ

### Educational institution secures leading ranks in KCET

Narayana Educational Institutions achieved top ranks in Karnataka Common Entrance Test (KCET) across multiple streams recently through focused coaching and strategic preparation. Harishraj DV secured 1st rank in veterinary, nursing, and BNYS along with ranks in D pharma, (3rd), B pharma (3rd), and agriculture (6th). Diganath S achieved 4th rank in D pharma and B pharma, and 8th in nursing. Divyansh Agrawal and Chaithanya Parama Shivam ranked 5th and 9th in engineering, respectively. Chaithanya Parama Shivam: 9th Rank (Engineering).

### Company encourages bicycle commute

To mark World Bicycle Day, Vantage Circle has launched a Cycle-to-Work Challenge from June 2 to June 6, as part of a broader effort to support employee health and environmental awareness. The initiative encourages employees to commute by bicycle over five days, aiming to reduce carbon emissions and increase physical activity. With attention to climate change and sedentary habits, the challenge promotes a shift toward sustainable transport focussing on practical steps toward workplace well-being and ecological responsibility.


ATTENTION !! CLASS 10th, 11th & 12th STUDENTS
CLAT
(COMMON LAW ADMISSION TEST)
5 YEARS LAW
FROM NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITIES
PREPARE FOR
CLAT 2026-27
ADMISSIONS OPEN
FOUNDATION BATCH
2 Years Program For 10th Pass Students
TARGET BATCH
1 Year Program For 11th Pass Students
DROPPER'S BATCH
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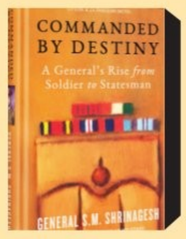
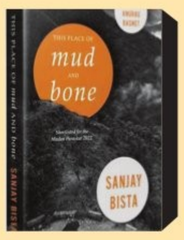
## BOOK NOOK




### Commanded By Destiny: A General's Rise from Soldier to Statesman

**General SM Shrinagesh**

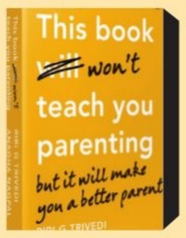
A remarkable account of General SM Shrinagesh's journey from soldier in a colonial army to India's 2nd Chief of Army Staff and the first military officer to serve as governor of three states.




### This Place of Mud and Bone

**by Sanjay Bista, trans. by Anurag Basnet**

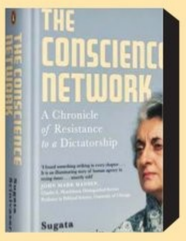
Spanning thirty years, the book follows the lives of these schoolmates as they negotiate a political struggle that continually shapeshifts but never ends. It is also a contemporary history of the Darjeeling hills that shows how people learn to absorb violence and live with it.




### This Book Won't Teach You Parenting

**by Riri G Trivedi and Anagha Nagpal**

Renowned psychotherapist Riri G. Trivedi and parent educator Anagha Nagpal's book offers a culturally nuanced approach to parenting, providing Indian parents with the tools they need to navigate the complexities of modern child-rearing.




### The Conscience Network

**by Sugata Srinivasaraju**

A groundbreaking exploration of India's 1975–77 Emergency, focusing on the unexpected yet pivotal role played by the diaspora in resisting Indira Gandhi's authoritarian rule.

**STRUTTING IN STYLE**

Models show off outfits designed by students of Pearl Academy, Residency Road, at their annual fashion show | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

## QUICKFIX

### EGG ROLLS

**INGREDIENTS**

- **Egg:** 1, beaten
- **Salt and pepper:** 1 tsp each
- **Green chilli (optional):** 2
- **Flour:** 1 cup
- **Carrot and onion:** 1 each
- **Oil:** 3-4 tbsp

**METHOD**

- Prepare the dough by adding ¾th cup of water to 1 cup of flour and kneading till it finds shape. Keep it aside for 20 minutes.
- Make round balls of dough and flatten into parathas using a rolling pin.
- Heat oil in a pan and cook the parathas on both sides.
- Heat more oil and add one beaten egg. Immediately place the paratha on the egg. Let it cook, and flip.
- Add sliced carrots, chopped onions, salt, black pepper, and chillies according to your preference.
- Roll it up, secure with a toothpick and serve.

Contributed by **Sanjivan JM Watson,** West Bengal

## ASK AN XPERT

DR VIVEK ARORA

*The expert is a senior veterinarian, Dr Gandhi's Pet Clinic, Delhi.*

**My 9-year-old Chihuahua has slept in my bed her whole life, and in the current bed for four years with no issues. But since a few days ago, she started shaking whenever she's in the bed, then jumps off and runs away. Could this be medical, psychological, or something else?**

The sudden shaking and unusual behaviour your Chihuahua is showing in the bed could stem from both medical and psychological causes. It might be related to physical discomfort such as joint pain, back problems, or an injury that becomes noticeable when she's in the bed. Alternatively, it could be a fear or psychological response linked to something she associates with the bed, like a negative experience. Given her age, arthritis, emotional or other discomforts including cardiac might be a factor. It's a good idea to consult a veterinarian to rule out medical concerns and address any emotional or behavioural triggers.

## FITBIT

### REVOLVED KNEELING POSE

This is a twisting (revolved) variation of the Kneeling Pose. It is a great alternative to standing and seated twists, to open the chest and shoulders, eliminating any stress and tension from the back, neck, and shoulders. It helps increase overall strength in the knees, core, back, arms, and shoulders while improving focus and concentration. This twisting practice can be added to yoga sequences for teens/kids, sportspeople, and working professionals. It prepares the body for advanced balance yoga poses. It can aid one in their higher yogic journeys, pranayama, and dhyana (concentration). Spiritually, it activates Sacral Chakra.

**STEPS**

- Start in Dandasana and take a few breaths here.
- Inhale, bend the right knee, placing the right foot close to the buttocks, and exhale.
- Take a big breath in and raise the buttocks off the floor to place the foot below the right buttock and sit on the right foot, exhaling completely.
- Repeat the same with the left leg. Seated in Vajrasana, take a few breaths here. Raise your spine and push your lower back onto the heels below you.
- Finally, inhale, come to stand on your knees while raising your body away from the heels, placing the back straight.
- Stand on your knees, in Kneeling Pose for a breath or two.
- Inhale, extend your arms up to the sky, pulling the body up in Kneeling Pose Arms Raised.
- Exhale, twist along your face and neck to the right, take your right hand behind and left hand in front, look right. Twisted hands are in one line at shoulder level with the palms facing right.
- Stay here for about six deep breaths or as per body's comfort. Avoid leaning back towards the toes.
- Slowly release and return to Kneeling Pose Arms Raised.
- Repeat the twist on the other side (left).
- Finally, release and relax in Balasana.

**BENEFITS**

- Releases stress or tightness from the neck, shoulders and back.
- Improves focus and concentration.
- Keep the legs active, knees and feet together.
- Improves spinal flexibility, counteracting the effects of hunched back.
- Develops strength in the legs,knees, and muscles and joints.
- Boosts energy by using the power tools of breath, movement, and discipline.
- Reduces blockages in the channels to facilitate the smooth flow of prana throughout the body.
- It can help improve breathing.
- Promotes emotional well-being.
- Included in yoga sequences for women, relieving menstrual symptoms.
- Helps reduce side belly fat while toning the arms and thighs.
- Strengthens lower abdominal and pelvic muscles.
- Tones legs with the core, spine and pelvic floor muscles.

**LIMITATIONS**

- Students with injury at knees, ankles, lower back, or legs, who have undergone any recent abdominal surgery, have weak knees, arthritis or knee pain, high blood pressure, headaches, nausea, migraine, vertigo, dizziness, balancing issues, or nervous ailments like epilepsy, trauma and anxiety, should avoid this. Seniors and pregnant women should practise slowly under the guidance of a yoga expert.

**By N Elumalai, PhD Scholar (Yoga Science) at Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research, Chennai**

**EXPRESS CONNECT**

HAVE A RECIPE OR ART WORK TO SHARE, OR A QUESTION TO ASK?

@XpressBengaluru/@tniefeatures

bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com

@xpress_bengaluru

## WHATWHENWHYWHERE

### Voice Through Art

A guided walk led by lawyer Shrimoyee Nandini Ghosh explores how six artworks open conversations about law, justice, and the representation of women. It traces voices that are heard and those that are silenced, questioning how power shapes visibility and speech.

**WHEN:** June 3, 5pm

**WHERE:** Museum of Art & Photography, Kasturba Road

**DETAILS:** map-india.org

### Summer Unleashed

Occupy energetic kids with this army-themed summer boot camp. From field drills to hands-on workshops and team challenges, every moment is packed with action. The event promises to keep kids active, teach new skills, and help make the most of the summer break.

**WHEN:** June 2, 11am

**WHERE:** The Galleria Mall, Yelahanka

**DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com

### Game time

With the cricket season in full swing, fans can catch the action with friends while indulging in delicious food and drinks. Come together to celebrate and avail 1+1 offers on select drinks while indulging in platters with the full squad.

**WHEN:** June 3, 7.30pm

**WHERE:** Across all the Social outlets

**DETAILS:** @socialoffline on Instagram

### Ladies' Night

Celebrate a night of Bollywood music and move to non-stop beats on the dance floor. Treat yourself to cocktails, mocktails, and a variety of appetisers with free drinks exclusively for women.

**WHEN:** June 3, 8pm

**WHERE:** Tipsy Bull, Koramangala

**DETAILS:** highape.com

### Jam Time

Musically inclined kids aged six to 13 can enrich their minds and ears with this hands-on introduction to the guitar, ukulele, keyboard, drums, and singing through guided sessions. At the end of the camp, kids will take to the stage for a group performance open to friends and family.

**WHEN:** June 2, 5.30am onwards

**WHERE:** My School of Rock, Koramangala

**DETAILS:** allevents.in

### Spice Up Summer

Savour the return of the spicy guava ice cream, a unique blend of guava, milk, sugar, and chilli powder offers a flavour that marks the change of seasons. Offer only available for 90 days.

**WHEN:** 11.30am to 12am

**WHERE:** All Naturals outlets

**DETAILS:** naturalicecreams.in

## ARTCORNER

### SYMBIOTIC CONTRAST

Artist Anurag Anand in his work depicts the symbiotic city – mansions and shanties, a visual of intertwined destinies

# HATCH ME IF YOU CAN!

LEKSHMI C PILLAI

AMONG the driving enthusiasts' clan, most pacify their inner beast with 1.0 or 1.5-litre turbocharged petrol cars delivering anywhere between 100 to 150hp. In an emerging country like ours, access to true performance cars remains limited – be it due to lower purchasing power or the impracticality of manufacturing such cars locally.

But if you are one of those unsatisfied with your modestly powered ride, here's the catch: a real hot hatch from Germany has landed on Indian shores – the Volkswagen Golf GTI Mk 8.5, the facelifted version of the 8th generation.

Priced at ₹53 lakh (ex-showroom), Volkswagen introduced it as a test offering, and the response? The entire batch of 150 fully imported units was booked even before the price was announced.

I got to test this sporty hatchback on Asia's longest high-speed test track – NATRAX in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. Designed for speeds up to 375 km/h, this world-class facility was the perfect place to unleash the GTI's potential.

### Exterior: Understated yet sporty

Visually, the Golf GTI is an understated machine. Though it shares the length and width of SUVs like the Creta, Grand Vitara, or Taigun, it's notably shorter, and the ground clearance is just 136 mm.

Its aerodynamic silhouette is accentuated by:

- Sleek LED headlamps connected by a red strip and a light bar
- Five X-shaped fog lamps on the front air dam grille
- An illuminated VW badge between the headlamps
- The side and rear design remain clean and minimal, highlighted by GTI badging, dual exhausts, LED tail-lamps, a spoiler, and 18-inch Richmond black alloys with red calipers.

**The car is available in four striking colours:** Kings Red Metallic, Oryx White Pearl, Moonstone Grey, and Grenadilla Black Metallic.

### Interior: premium & purposeful

Step inside, and you're greeted by a rich, driver-centric cabin. Sporty fabric seats with GTI badging. The other features include:

- Multifunctional sports steering wheel with red accents and GTI clasp
- 12.9-inch infotainment touchscreen & 10.25-inch driver display
- 30 ambient lighting colours
- 3-zone automatic climate control
- Stainless steel inserts, sunroof, seven speakers, wireless app connect, IDA voice assistant
- While the front seats are impressive, the rear seats are less so – best for two, with limited thigh support. The focus is clearly on the driver. Manual seat adjustment and lack of seat ventilation are notable omissions.

**FACTS BOX**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Concept Origin:** | 1974 (by six Volkswagen insiders, including PR head Anton Konrad) |
| **Global Launch:** | 1976 |
| **Legacy:** | Nearly 50 years \| 37 million units sold worldwide |
| **Engine:** | 2.0L TSI turbo petrol |
| **Transmission:** | 7-speed DSG |
| **Power:** | 265 PS \| Torque: 370 Nm |
| **Top Speed:** | 267 km/h |
| **0–100 km/h:** | 5.9 seconds |
| **Dimensions (mm):** | L-4289 \| W-1789 \| H-1471 |
| **Wheelbase:** | 2627mm |
| **Ground clearance:** | 136mm |
| **Import type:** | CBU (Completely Built Unit) |
| **Price:** | Rs 53 lakh (ex-showroom) |
| **Colours:** | Kings Red Metallic, Oryx White Pearl, Moonstone Grey, Grenadilla Black Metallic |

### Performance: A true GTI experience

This is where the Golf GTI truly shines. Fire up the 2.0-litre turbocharged petrol engine, and the throaty exhaust note instantly signals its intent. With 265 hp and 370 Nm of torque, the GTI sprints from 0–100 km/h in just 5.9 seconds.

On the 11.3km NATRAX high-speed track, the GTI reached 267 km/h with ease, lap after lap. The throttle response was instant, the 7-speed DSG transmission seamless, and the stability unmatched. It's pure German precision.

Handling was tested on a separate technical circuit, where the GTI displayed impeccable control, even through tight corners at triple-digit speeds. Safety is enhanced with Level 2 ADAS, offering 20 advanced driver assistance features.

### Verdict: Worth the price?

Yes, the GTI costs nearly twice its European price due to import duties (as a CBU). And yes, it misses out on some comfort features like electric seat adjustment and cooled seats. But for the driving purist, none of that matters. What you get is an engineering marvel — the sportiest hot hatch in its class, offering thrilling performance, superior handling, and a rich heritage.

The writer is a freelance auto expert who hosts TV shows and anchors the YouTube channel 'CARKADUVA'

XPRESS HIGHWAY
SEGMENT ON WHAT'S REVVING UP IN THE AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR

## NEW RELEASES

### HONDA X-ADV

Priced at ₹ 11.90 lakh (ex-showroom), the X-ADV is a unique crossover between an adventure motorcycle and a maxi-scooter. Powered by a 745cc parallel-twin engine delivering 43.1 kW and 69 Nm, it excels in both city commutes and off-road touring.

### TATA ALTROZ 2025

Starting at ₹ 6.89 lakh, the refreshed Altroz now offers updated styling, a tech-laden cabin, and multiple powertrains – including petrol, diesel, and Tata's iCNG twin-cylinder tech. For the first time, it also introduces a 5-speed AMT, along with existing 5-speed manual and 6-speed DCA options.

### MG WINDSOR EXCLUSIVE PRO

The latest in MG's EV lineup, the Windsor Exclusive PRO is priced at ₹ 17.24 lakh (ex-showroom), or ₹ 12.24 lakh + ₹ 4.5/km under Battery-as-a-Service (BaaS). It comes with a 52.9 kWh battery and a certified MIDC range of 449 km. Deliveries begin this month.

### HYUNDAI I20 MAGNA EXECUTIVE

Hyundai introduces a new 'Magna Executive' trim of the i20 at ₹ 7.51 lakh (ex-showroom), adding premium features like six airbags, ESC, VSM, and iVT transmission. A sunroof is now also available in the Magna variant, making it a well-rounded offering for aspiring buyers.

JITHA KARTHIKEYAN

*(The writer is an artist and curator, passionate about making art accessible to the larger public)*

TALKING ART

# VIRTUAL CONVERSATIONS OF ART

NO literate member of the human species has ever been spared an exclusive membership in the billions of WhatsApp groups that orbit around planet Earth. Even the senior members of the tribe would be enrolled in the main and flourishing sub-sects of the clan groups. Waking up to a good morning quote with a bright sunrise or ending the day with a goodnight quote with a teddy bear coaxing you to close your eyes and call it a day has become the universal code for every group's smooth functioning. How the hours in between are tackled and the nature of the topics that are debated depend on the purpose laid out for the formation of the collective in the first place.

Family groups, for instance, are a collection of antonyms in human form. There are the elderly patriarchs and matriarchs of the dynasty who just can't get enough of the power they can continue to wield in their twilight years with a mere click of a finger, and periodically forward mind-numbing jokes. Then there are those eternally-in-pilgrimage mode aunties who consider their spiritual and religious posts as the gospel of salvation for the kin. The freshly settled ones bombard the group with photographs of their new car from every angle, the Bali holiday, and that handshake of appreciation from the big boss in the office headquarters. The already settled down and worn out ones, drudging towards retirement consistently share snapshots of the calories they have burned and the steps they have walked per day, as if life's every moment has to be measured to be meaningful. Amidst all this, the younger lot of cousins form their own groups to giggle at all this and to make their own travel plans together.

Office groups are no different. School and college groups are by far the most fragile, as members have mostly taken diverse paths ever since they bid farewell to their student days. To reconnect after years and co-exist in a virtual space takes immense patience – to adjust to new avatars of those you've shared your carefree childhood and adolescent years with.

That said, one may wonder if there can ever be WhatsApp groups for artists. Artists are notorious for being absolute loners, perfectly content with their solitude and fiercely protective of their individualism. How, then, can they ever be a part of a larger cluster, and what conversations could ever transpire?

Well, artists, too, have groups they belong to. Art, politics, the environment, social issues, and all other topics that affect life are analysed with the ultimate goal of collectively sharing concerns and often, finding ways to address those concerns too. Debates are thrown around, tempers do rise, but in the end, there lies the satisfaction of having engaged in a constructive process that leaves one to only accept what fits. Art may be a solitary pursuit, but a virtual grouping of this nature helps artists engage with the world and fosters an openness to divergent ideas. Silence may be the soul's best friend, but art needs the hum of dialogues too!

## NUGGETS

### New outlet to serve succulent burgers

Smash Guys, a new outlet by brothers Nikhil and Abhijit Gupta opened its first outlet in Indiranagar recently, serving smash burgers, incorporating American, Indian and global flavours. Open between 6pm and 11pm, with prices starting at ₹1,700 onwards, the outlet has built interest through pop-ups and online drops. Chef Adithya Kidambi and executive chef Subhayan Das have developed a smash technique, serving dishes like smash-style beef and chicken burgers alongside veg options like Mac & Cheese Burger, and Korean Fried Paneer with desserts like Old Monk mousse.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, SHASHIVARUN SABLUR MOHAN, residing at: No. 188, Pride Vatika Layout, Koppa Gate, Bukkasagara Village, Bannerughatta, Bengaluru-560083 have changed my name to **SHASHIVARUN S M GOWDA** vide Affidavit dated 31.05.2025 sworn before Advocate and Notary B.M. Chandrashekar, Bangalore.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS **CLASSIFIEDS**

PUBLIC NOTICE

CHANGE OF NAME

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **(OLD NAME) NAVEEN KUMAR LAKSHMAYYA**, Residing at No: 6, Vedanth Nilaya, Lakshmaiah Compound, 12th Cross, Mukthi Nagar, Vinayaka Temple Street, Arabic College Post, Kadugondanahalli, Bangalore-560 045, have changed my Name from **(OLD NAME) NAVEEN KUMAR LAKSHMAYYA to (NEW NAME) NAVEEN KUMAR LAKSHMAIAH** Vide affidavit dated 31.05.2025 sworn before Notary Ramachandrappa.C, Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **(OLD NAME) KAZIA ANITHA** D/o. Andrew Ravi, Residing at No.261, 4th Cross, Old K.E.B Office Road, Near Kaval Byrasandra Bus stop, Kaval Byrasandra, R.T. Nagar, Bangalore-560 032, have changed my Name from **(OLD NAME) KAZIA ANITHA to (NEW NAME) KEZIA.A** Vide affidavit dated 31.05.2025 sworn before Notary Sumithra N, Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **K POORNA PRAKASH REDDY**, residing at #395, 4th Cross, Telecom Layout, Srirama Apartment, Bengaluru North, Vidyaranyapura, Bengaluru 560097, have changed the name of my minor daughter from **K P CHAYANA** to **K P CHESHVIIKA**, vide Affidavit Dated: 30/05/2025, sworn before Notary **S.I.BALAGURU**, Bengaluru.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **MUSTAFA TAIYEBBHAI TOTANAWALA** (New Name) previously called TOTANAWALA MUSTAFA (Old Name), S/o.Mustafa Totanawala, resident of Radiant Prime Rose Apartment, No. 309, 2nd Floor, 22nd Main, 2nd Cross, Near Rizwan Masjid, J.P.Nagar 5th Phase, Bangalore South, Bangalore-560 078

I have changed my name from **"TOTANAWALA MUSTAFA"** to **"MUSTAFA TAIYEBBHAI TOTANAWALA"** Vide Affidavit dated **30/05/2025,** Sworn to before **Mohammed Hussain.K**, at Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **RAGAVENDRA P**, S/o Puttaswamy K, R/o H.No.75A, Sri Sai Nilaya Sector A, 7th Cross, Pride Vatika Layout, Bukkasagara Village, Jigani Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru - 560105 have changed my name from **RAGAVENDRA P** to **RAGHAVENDRA P** vide affidavit dated 23.05.2025 sworn before notary B.M. Chandrashekar, Bengaluru.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **Rahathunnisa** W/o. Mohammed Aslam, Aged about 49 years, Residing at No. 12, 6th A Cross, Kanakanagar, R.T. Nagar Post, Bengaluru - 560 032, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **Rahathunnisa** to **Rahathunnisa Mohammed Aslam** vide affidavit dated 31.05.2025 sworn to before Prakasha .C, Advocate & Notary, Bengaluru.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

We, **SURESH R**, S/o Rudrappa and **Mrs. MANJULA H**, W/o. Mr. Suresh R, residing at Siri Sumanth Enclave, 2nd Floor, Flat Number 302, Nanjappa layout, Isro Layout, Ayyappa Temple, Yalachenahalli Ward 185, Bengaluru-560078, Karnataka, India, declare that we have changed the name of our Minor Son from **NEELANSH B S** (Old Name) to **AVYAN AKASH SHIVAM** (New Name), henceforth our Son shall be known and called as **AVYAN AKASH SHIVAM** (New Name) only for all purpose, vide Affidavit dated: 31/05/2025 before MOHAMMED HUSSAIN.K, at BENGALURU.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **SRINATH MADHAV MURTHY** S/o **N G MADHAVA MURTHY** R/at No 26/C Kamala Catage 38th Cross 8th Block Jayanagar Bengaluru- 560070 have changed my name to **SRINATH MADHAVA MURTHY** vide affidavit dated: 30/5/2025 Before Notary **K.V.Mani** Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I **MRUDUL** S/O Sanjeeva Gowda, aged about 17 years, residing at Flat No. 101 A. Sidha Basil, No. 14, 1st Main, 1st Block, Opp. Bank of India, BEL Layout, Vidyaranyapura, Bengaluru, Karnataka - 560097, changed my name to **MRUDUL S. GOWDA,** vide affidavit no. IN-KA40503029201519X dated 26-05-2025 sworn before Notary Ravi. S., Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **MANNAM NAGARAJU**, S/o Mannam Bangaraiah, age 35 years, R/at No. 101, Karumanchi, Tangutur Mandal, Tangutur Prakasam, Andra Pradesh-523 272, presently at Bangalore do hereby declare that both the names of my daughter i.e. **MANNAM AVANTHIKA** and **MANNAM ABHINAYASHRI** are one and the same and refers to my daughter only, now I have changed her name to **MANNAM ABHINAYASHRI,** vide affidavit dated 31-05-2025, sworn before Advocate and Notary **YANKOBA** at Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **SHERE BANU MUSTAFA TOTANAWALA** (New Name) previously called TOTANAWALA SHERE BANU (Old Name), S/o.Mustafa Totanawala, resident of Radiant Prime Rose Apartment, No. 309, 2nd Floor, 22nd Main, 2nd Cross, Near Rizwan Masjid, J.P.Nagar 5th Phase, Bangalore South, Bangalore-560 078

I have changed my name from **"TOTANAWALA SHERE BANU "** to **"SHERE BANU MUSTAFA TOTANAWALA"** Vide Affidavit dated **30/05/2025,** Sworn to before **Mohammed Hussain.K,** at Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **SHWETA SRIRAMA**, W/o. SRIRAMA B, resident of No. 402, Pratham Case Serene Apartment, Ayyappa Swamy Temple Street, Near Jalahalli Cross, Jalahalli, Bangalore-560057, Karnataka State, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **SHWETA** to **SHWETA SRIRAMA**, vide affidavit dated 31.05.2025, sworn to before C.K. Anupama, Advocate & Notary Public, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **KUMAR CAROUNANIDY**, aged about 47 years, S/o. CAROUNANIDY M, residing at No. 702, 16th Main, A Block, Sahakara Nagar, Bangalore North, Bengaluru-560092, do hereby declare that I have changed my son's name from **JEIAKASH** to **JEIAKASH KUMAR,** vide affidavit dated 31.05.2025, sworn to before K.V. Nanjaiah, Advocate & Notary Public, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, SANTOSINI DEVI PRASADINI SUBUDHI LADI W/o. Santosh Kumar Ladi, R/a #C2,1908, L&T South City Apartment, Arekere Mico Layout, Off Bannerghatta Road, Bangalore- 560076 have changed my Name to SANTOSINI PARISINTI vide affidavit dated 30.5.2025 before Notary T.C. Thimmaraja, Bengaluru.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **SUNDAR SRINIVASA GOPALA IYENGAR** S/o **Late N SRINIVASA GOPALA IYENGAR**, resident of Flat No. 316, Comfort Enclave, No. 16, 1st Cross, Ganganagar, RT Nagar Post, Bengaluru- 560032, Karnataka, state that my name **SRINIVASA SUNDAR** is a variation of **SUNDAR SRINIVASA GOPALA IYENGAR** (Real and Final Name) sworn vide affidavit dated 28-05-2025 before Notary **JALANDHARA**, Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

**I, MAMTHA. K** W/o Mohan Kumar B. N, aged about 38 years, R/at: No.E-367 49, 7th Cross, 3rd Main, Vidhana Soudha Layout, Laggere, Peenya Small Industries, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru - 560 058, have changed my name from **MAMATHA K** to **MAMTHA. K,** vide affidavit dated 31/5/2025 sworn to before B.Chitra Advocate and Notary Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **LOKANATHA RAJU M.C,** S/o Chinnappa, aged about 58 years, R/at No.22, Rajamma Garden, Jaraganahalli, Bangalore-560 076, hereby declare that my names **LOKANATHA RAJU & LOKANATHA RAJU M.C** are one and the same names which belongs to myself only. In future I use my name as **LOKANATHA RAJU M.C** only. Vide affidavit dated: 26-5-2025, sworn before Notary B.M. Chandrashekar, Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **RAVI KUMAR KULKARNI**, S/o. Late Janardhan Rao, residing at No. 54, 2nd Cross, SAI Garden Layout, 8th Main Vidyaranyapura, Bangalore-560097, do hereby declare that I have changed my son's name from **SHRIHAN RAVI KUMAR** to **SHRIHAN.** Henceforth, he shall be known and called as **SHRIHAN** only, vide affidavit dated 31/05/2025 sworn before advocate and notary K.C.Pemmaiah, at Bengaluru.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **NANDINI DAS**, aged about 38 years, W/o. Mr. Arun Srinivasan, residing at No. 5, 6th Road, Nandidurga Extension, Jayamahal, Bengaluru-560046, do hereby declare that all the said names i.e., **NANDINI DAS** and **NANDINI DAS MYSORE PURANDARA** are of one and the same person i.e, myself, vie affidavit dated 31.05.2025, sworn to before K.V. Nanjaiah, Advocate & Notary Public, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **SUNDARAN MALEDOM,** previously called **'SUNDARAN. M & SUNDARAN MALEDOM KRISHNA MENON'** S/o Late Krishna Menon Padaveetil, aged about 62 Years, residing at: Flat No. F-1, 1st Floor, Srikanth Vista, 8th Cross, Abbaiah Reddy Layout, Kaggadasapura, C. V. Raman Nagar Post, Bangalore-560 093. Hereby declare that, I have changed my name to **'SUNDARAN MALEDOM',** vide Affidavit dated 31.05.2025, Notarial Reg. No.273/2025, Page No.63, Sworn before Advocate and Notary N. Narayana Swamy, Bengaluru.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **VISHNU PRIYA** D/o Ammalu, Resident At No.81/1/55, K.No.659,3, 14th Main, Maruthi Layout, Hongasandra, Begur Main Road, Bengaluru-560068. Hereby declare that as per my Aadhar Card, SSLC and PUC Marks Cards and TC my mother name is mentioned as **AMMALU.M**, But in my mother's Aadhar Card, Voter ID, Pan Card and Bank Account her name is mentioned as **MALU** Both the names pertain to my mother only, vide affidavit dated 30.05.2025 sworn to before Notary **K V Mani,** Bengaluru.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

We, Smt. GEETHA Y, W/o. SHIVA KUMAR HP, aged about 34 years and Sri. SHIVA KUMAR H P, S/o. LATE PILLAPPA SWAMY, aged about 38 years, residing at No. 136, A Krishnappa Nagar, Halanayakanahalli, Varthuru Hobali, Carmalaram Post, Doddakannalli, Sarjapura Main Road, Bengaluru South, Bengaluru - 560035, we have changed our son's name from **MOHITH .S to MOHITH SHEKAR** vide Affidavit dated 08.05.2025 sworn before Advocate and Notary Mamatha .N.K, Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I Nagarjuna S, S/o of Sriramappa, aged about 34 years, residing at No.51/4, 2nd cross, Krishnappa Layout, near Hanuman Temple Subramanyampura post, Bengaluru - 560061, have change my son name from Prajwal N Nagarjuna to Prajwal N.

advocate and notary by **Anitha Bai**

**NAME CHANGE**

I, **SHAGUFTA A CHANDAWALE**,W/o. Yaseen A Pathan, aged about 43 years, residing at No. Maangalya Signature S-911, Near JP Nagar 9th Phase, Anjanapura Post, Bengaluru South, Bengaluru-108,declare that the following names a.SHAGUFTA CHANDAWALE D/o Chandawale Allapatel as per Passport No. H7809898. b.SHAGUFTA CHANDAWALE D/o Allapatel Chandawale as per Voter ID No. SCQ5994090. c.SHAGUFTA A CHANDAWALE W/o.Yaseen A Pathan as per Aadhaar No. 4971 9687 2471.d.SHAGUFTA A CHANDAWALE D/o Allapatel Chandawale as per Permanent Account No.AIRPC6713F. e.SHAGUFTA A CHANDAWALE W/o. Yaseen A Pathan as per IDBI Bank, Account No:1140104000023597. are all variations of my own name and they all refer to one and the same person but correct name is **SHAGUFTA A CHANDAWALE** vide affidavit date: 20-05-2025 sworn before notary G R Rajanna, Bengaluru-62

# *Timmana Mottegalu* locks its theatrical release date

CE FEATURES

THE makers of Rakshit Tirthahalli's third directorial venture, *Timmana Mottegalu*, have locked its theatrical release on June 27. The announcement was made along with the release of the lyrical video for the song Kaadu Daari, sung by Vasuki Vaibhav.

The film is produced under the Shreekrishna Productions banner and marks the production debut of Shivamogga-based NRI Adarsh Iyengar. Based on a short story from Rakshit's acclaimed collection Kaadina Nentaru, the film explores the intertwined relationship between humans, nature, and animals.

Shot in and around Shivamogga and Chikkamagaluru in a single schedule, the film captures the essence of life in the Western Ghats, highlighting the values, simplicity, and sensitivity of people living amidst the hills. The film had its premiere in Dallas, USA, where it received positive feedback. It was also screened at the Kolkata International Film Festival and earned a Special Jury Mention at the Dadasaheb Phalke Film Festival held in Delhi.

The ensemble cast includes Keshav Guttahalli, Suchendra Prasad, Ashika Somashekar, Sringeri Ramanna, Pragati Prabhu, Raghu Ramanakoppa, Master Harsha, Vinay Kanive, Prithviraj Kopp, and Pranesh Kulegadde.

The film features cinematography by Praveen S, editing by Kemparaju B S, and music by Hemanth Jois.

# 'Films have advanced technically, but they lack emotional depth'

...says actor Sudha Rani, in this conversation about her production debut with the short film *Ghost*, directed by Sudesh K Rao, and expresses her hope to back more films that bring emotional richness

A SHARADHAA

SUDHA RANI'S journey in Kannada cinema spans over four decades and more than 175 films. Beginning as a child artist, she made her debut as a lead actor opposite Shivarajkumar in *Anand* (1986), and quickly established herself as one of the industry's most versatile and enduring talents. Over the years, Sudha Rani has shared screen space with Kannada's biggest stars and successfully transitioned into impactful supporting roles. Her presence has also been felt on television, notably in the popular serial Srirastu Shubhamastu.

Now, Sudha Rani is exploring new creative horizons—venturing into film production with the psychological thriller short film *Ghost*, subtitled The Devva. "There's good and evil in the world—God and *ghost*s. It's all about perception," she explains, sharing the core idea behind the film. Sudha Rani felt compelled to bring this intriguing concept to life, which is inspired by director Sudesh K Rao's story, who also stars alongside her. On why she chose to produce a short film instead of a full-length feature, Sudha Rani says, "I'm always eager to learn and try new things. A decade ago, I thought of exploring other industries, but I realised this is where I belong. Since acting and dubbing were already part of my life, I wanted to explore production. Direction requires innate talent, so I felt production was a better place to start." She adds, "A short film suits today's attention span and is manageable within a budget. It's a challenge to tell a compelling story within a limited timeframe." Sudha Rani's creative synergy with director Sudesh K Rao is a key element of the film: "We share a passion for cinema and creativity. When Sudesh narrated *Ghost*, I was drawn to its psychological depth. I have always been interested in psychology, so this project felt like a perfect fit."

*A short film suits today's attention span and is manageable within a budget. It's a challenge to tell a compelling story within a limited timeframe*

Sudha Rani, actor/ producer

Regarding its release, she says, "We initially thought of releasing it on YouTube, but there are many platforms that support short films now. I also plan to submit it to festivals that appreciate this genre." Reflecting on the film's making, Sudha Rani recalls, "We avoided heavy technology and focused on authenticity. The team's passion and talent came together beautifully. Commercially, it's a small venture, but it brings immense satisfaction." On the state of cinema today, she observes, "Technically, today, films have advanced, but often lack emotional depth—the real connection with the audience. I hope to back more films that bring that emotional richness and revive that lost glory," she concludes.

Sudha Rani

**Inspired by the legends: Mukesh Kumar Singh**

"I directed the *Mahabharat* series and have watched both *Bedara Kannappa* and *Shiva Mecchida Kannappa*. Their performances shaped my vision for *Kannappa*," said director Mukesh Kumar Singh

**Many films can be inspired by Annavru's *Bedara Kannappa*: Rockline Venkatesh**

"Many films can be inspired by *Bedara Kannappa*, the legendary work of Annavru (Dr Rajkumar). Now, Vishnu Manchu has made *Kannappa*, and it comes with many unique features. I've already watched it—the actors have truly breathed life into their roles," said Rockline Venkatesh, who is distributing the film in Karnataka.

**Our bond with Dr Rajkumar & Ambareesh family is unforgettable: Mohan Babu**

"I've always wanted to act in a Kannada film. I told this to my late friend Ambareesh. Our bond with Dr Rajkumar and Ambareesh's family is unforgettable. We shot *Kannappa* on a grand set in New Zealand. It's a tribute to both Rajkumar and Shivarajkumar. Rockline Venkatesh, a close friend through Ambareesh, is distributing it in Karnataka," said actor-filmmaker Mohan Babu.

**I was supposed to act in *Kannappa*: Shivarajkumar**

"I was initially supposed to act in *Kannappa*, but date clashes with other projects made it impossible. That said, I will definitely work with Vishnu Manchu in a full-fledged film one day. Mohan Babu is like family, and if he calls, I'll act with love. *Kannappa* is releasing this June, and it's going to be a massive hit. I'll be there on day one to watch the film," said Shivanna.

# 'Dr Rajkumar's *Bedara Kannappa* was a mass entertainer in its time'

...says Vishnu Manchu, who was in Bengaluru, when he discussed adapting a devotional classical like Kannappa in a tech-driven format for today

CE FEATURES

IN 1954, *Bedara Kannappa* marked the cinematic rise of Dr Rajkumar. Decades later, in 1988, Shivarajkumar carried the torch forward with Shiva Mecchida *Kannappa*. Now, 37 years on, the iconic tale of the ardent Shiva devotee returns in a new avatar — *Kannappa*, a multilingual film, lead by Vishnu Manchu and produced on a lavish scale by his father, Dr Mohan Babu. *Kannappa* is set to hit the screens worldwide on June 27. All eyes are on whether this fusion of faith, fantasy, and modern cinema can strike a chord with today's audience.

We caught up with Vishnu Manchu at the film's teaser and song launch in Bengaluru, an event graced by Shivarajkumar and Rockline Venkatesh, who is also distributing the film across Karnataka. Amidst the fanfare, Vishnu spoke exclusively to CE about redefining devotion for a modern audience.

When asked about adapting a devotional classic in a tech-driven, commercial format, he responded candidly: "Back then, they made Bedara *Kannappa* with what they had. Today, we're doing the same — using what's available to us. But while technology has changed, devotion hasn't. The way we tell the story, however, must evolve."

He continues, "If I say I'm making a devotional film, how many under-25s will come to the theatre? I had to present *Kannappa* in a way that this generation would relate to — through fantasy, action, and spectacle. That doesn't dilute the devotion; it enhances the storytelling."

Addressing whether *Kannappa* is a commercial entertainer masked as a devotional film, an unfiltered Vishnu says, "Every movie today is a commercial film. Otherwise, it becomes a documentary. Even Bedara *Kannappa* was a mass entertainer in its time. With the kind of budget we've put into *Kannappa*, I want it to reach as many people as possible. This is my version of how I pray to Lord Shiva."

On the absence of Kannada actors apart from Devaraj, he clarified they had approached Shivarajkumar to play Shiva. "He initially agreed, but date clashes made it impossible. That's when Akshay Kumar stepped in. Still, the soul of the story is universal."

Drawing parallels with *Kantara*, he adds, "*Kantara* as a film was rooted in Karnataka, but resonated everywhere. That's what we are aiming for. Good stories will cross all boundaries."

As for the theatrical experience and the looming wave of AI in filmmaking, a candid Vishnu says, "We don't know what's coming. We're learning every day. But the experience of watching a movie in a theatre — that will never change."

# Stranger Things S5, *Wake Up Dead Man* get premiere dates

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AT their annual live event, Tudum, which took place on Saturday, Netflix rolled out a slew of announcements. The much-awaited final season of *Stranger Things* finally has a premiere date. Split into three volumes, the first part of season 5 will start streaming on November 6. The second volume will arrive on Christmas 2025, while the finale is set to drop on New Year's Eve. The final season will feature eight episodes with intriguing titles such as *The Crawl, The Turnbow Trap, Sorcerer*, and *Escape From Camazotz*. One episode remains partially under wraps, titled *The Vanishing of__*. In the upcoming season, the original cast members Finn Wolfhard, Noah Schnapp, Caleb McLaughlin, Millie Bobby Brown, David Harbour, Winona Ryder, Natalia Dyer, Charlie Heaton, and Sadie Sink, will be joined by Linda Hamilton, Nell Fisher, Jake Connelly, and Alex Breaux.

Apart from the original series, Netflix also announced the release date of the third instalment in Rian Johnson's hit whodunit franchise, *Wake Up Dead Man: A Knives Out Mystery*. The film will start streaming on December 12. With Daniel Craig returning as Detective Benoit Blanc, the cast of the film also includes Josh O'Connor, Cailee Spaeny, Josh Brolin, Andrew Scott, Daryl McCormack, Jeremy Renner, Mila Kunis, Kerry Washington, Glenn Close, and Thomas Haden Church.

Other significant announcements at the event include Lady Gaga joining the cast of *Wednesday*, the first look of Tony Tony Chopper from *One Piece* season 2, the first teaser of Guillermo Del Toro's *Frankenstein*, Matt Damon and Ben Affleck's crime thriller *The RIP*, which is set to stream on January 16, 2026.